

FEBRUARY

No. 31

10¢

SMASH COMICS



THE RAY



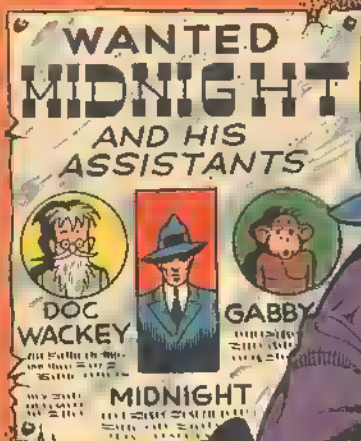
ESPIONAGE



WINGS WENDALL



ROOKIE RANKIN





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The RAY

CHARGED WITH
STRATOSPHERIC LIGHT-
NING, HAPPY TERRILL,
ACE REPORTER, HAS
BECOME THE
INVINCIBLE RAY.....

WHO IS
MONSIEUR LE RAT?
IS THE BRAVE ARMY OF
FREE FRANCE BEING
BETRAYED BY OFFICERS
IN THE HIGH COMMAND ??
SUSPICION POINTS THEIR
WAY!! HAS THE RAY AN
ANSWER ??

BY

E. DECKARD

HAPPY TERRILL FACES HIS EDITOR..

I'VE BOOKED
PASSAGE FOR YOU
ON THE CLIPPER
TO LISBON...
YOU'RE GOING
RAT CATCHING
IN SYRIA,
TERRILL!!

THANKS,
BOSS!!



WAR CORRESPONDENT,
BOY CH, BOY!! AND WILL I
LIKE TO DIG UP THE
TRAITOR THAT'S HANDING
DE GAULLE'S SECRETS OVER
TO THE NAZIS..

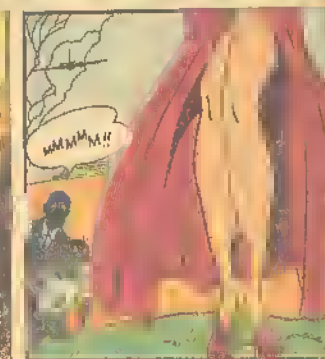


BUD!! WHAT...NOW!!
LOOK, KID...THIS TIME IT'S
TOO DANGEROUS
A JOB!! YOU STAY HOME!!





A WEEK LATER ON THE SYRIAN SANDS....



JUST THEN..



BUD'S "LONGED FOR" BOMB HAS JUST DROPPED...



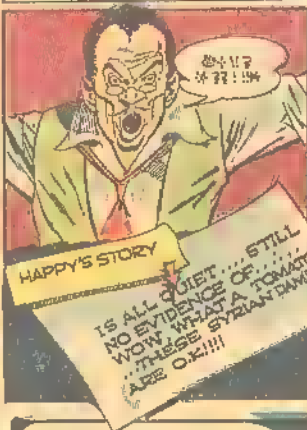
HAPPY TERRILL HAS VANISHED !!!



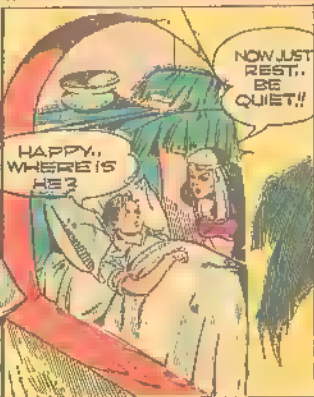
LATER...

THE AMERICAN WAS KILLED BY THE BOMB... BUT WE SHALL CABLE HIS STORY TO HIS PAPER, HENRI!!

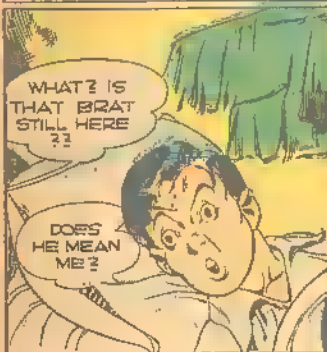
WHEN THE EDITOR READS THE CABLE....



MEANWHILE, THE GIRL HAS NURSED BUD BACK TO HEALTH..



BUT WHEN BUD IS ALONE...



A SERVANT SEES BUD TO THE DOOR..



LATER BUD RETURNS SECRETLY....



HAPPY IS NEARER THAN BUD THINKS.. PAINFULLY HE RISES FROM THE FLOOR OF THE PASSAGE WHERE THE BOMB THREW HIM....



COMPANY?



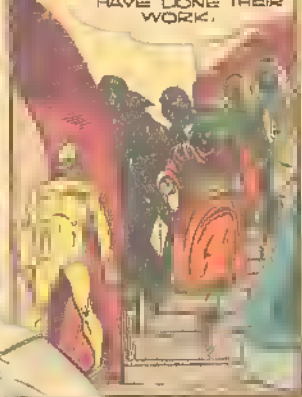
ACHMED SAID TO PLACE THE EXPLOSIVES AT EVERY FIVE FEET. THERE WILL BE LITTLE LEFT OF THE GARRISON..



BACK AT THE HOUSE AT THE
EDGE OF THE DESERT..



WE WILL SEE IF
ABDUL AND HASUN
HAVE DONE THEIR
WORK.



THE GOLDEN FISTED RAY
STRIKES FROM THE DARK..



WHILE ON THE ROOF OF
ACHMED'S HOUSE...



AS THE BEAM STREAKS OUT..



THE RAY!!



HOW'D HE GET BACK HERE?
HE'S RIGHT!! IT IS
THE RAY!!



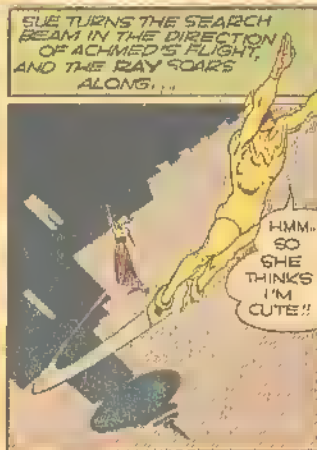
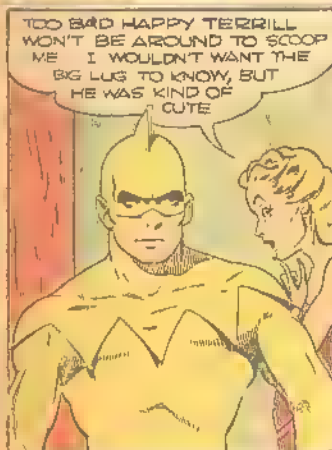
STALL HIM
OFF.. WE'LL
TAKE THE
KID!!



M. M. M. THE BEAUTIFUL
SYRIAN GIRL.

WHERE
DID THEY
GO?





AT THE HEAD OF THE CARAVAN...

"HAH!" WE HAVE CLEVERLY
ELUDED THE RAY HE'LL
NEVER SUSPECT A
HARMLESS CARAVAN



BUT, THE LAST CAMEL RIDER
SUDDENLY LEAVES HIS MOUNT...



...AND TAKES A SANDY LANDING!



A MOMENT LATER, A NEW
RIDER ALIGHTS



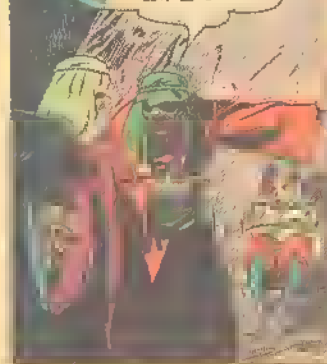
ONLY THE DROMEDARY KNOWS
OF THE TRANSACTION, AND
HE'S NOT TALKING....



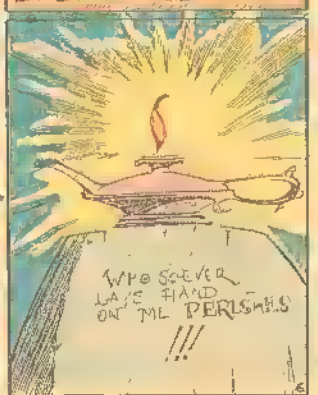
AS THE PROCESSION NEARS A
HILL, A ROCK IS MOVED ASIDE
BY UNSEEN FORCES...



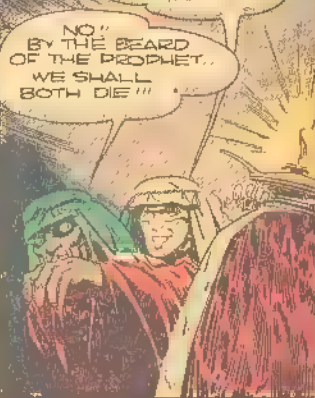
YOU TWO STAY HERE TO
GUARD THE BOY! WE'LL
DEAL WITH HIM
LATER



THE SHADOWY CAVERN IS
LIT BY A SINGLE LAMP...



LET ME SEE
THAT





AS THE RAY RUBS THE LAMP, THE WALL SLIDES NOISELESSLY BACK...



CLIMBING TO THE GIANT HEAD, THE RAY MAKES A STARTLING DISCOVERY...



AS A LEVER IN THE BACK IS
PRESSED, THE GIANT JAWS
SPRINGS OPEN...



AND CRUNCH DOWN UPON THE
RAY'S NECK!!!



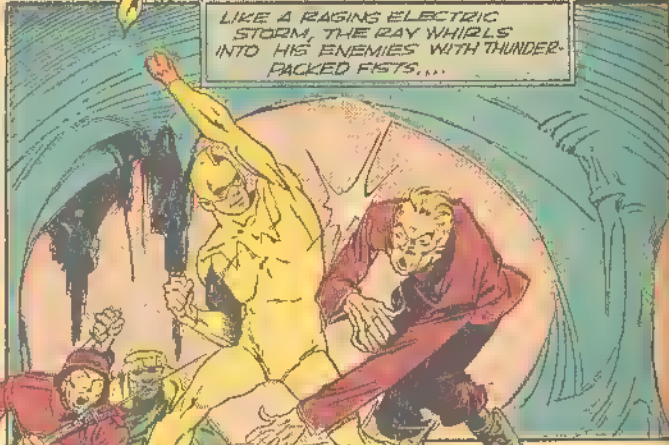
BUT WITH A TERRIFIC
WRENCH, THE RAY TEARS
THE HOLLOW HEAD FROM
THE BODY!!



AND, HURLS IT...

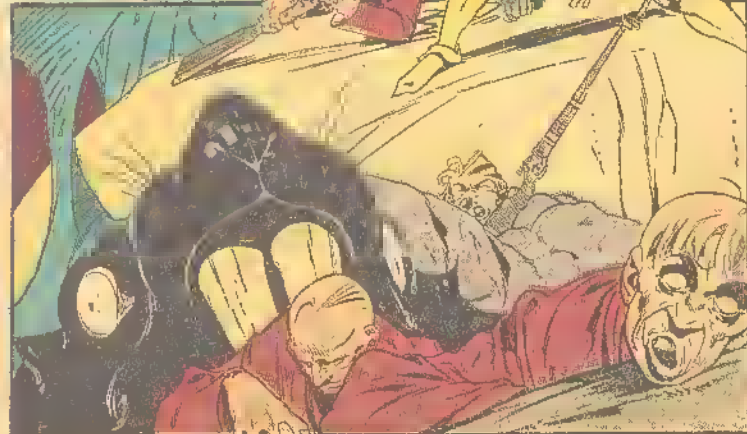


LIKE A RAGING ELECTRIC
STORM, THE RAY WHIRLS
INTO HIS ENEMIES WITH THUNDER-
PACKED FISTS...



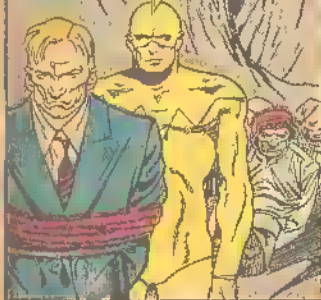
AND BUD ISN'T
IDLE, EITHER...

BOY! AM I GLAD
MY MICRO-CAMERA
DIDN'T GET
SMASHED BY THAT
BOMB!!!



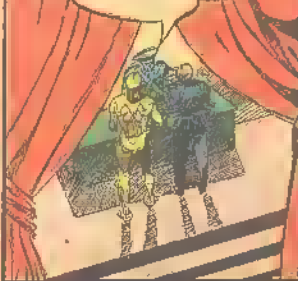
WHEN THE "STORM" IS OVER

O.K., FRITZIE, MARCH
WE'VE GOT A
VISIT TO
PAY!!



AT FREE FRENCH
HEADQUARTERS...

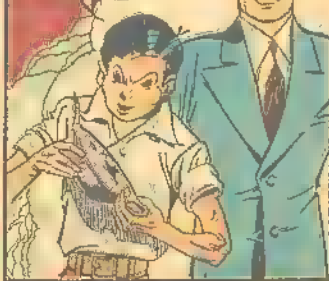
YOU'LL FIND THE
OTHERS IN THE CAVE..
MONSIEUR LE RAT IS
QUITE BROKEN UP
OVER THE WHOLE
THING!!



NEXT DAY..

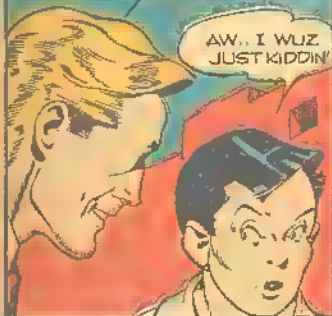
DARN!!
I CAN'T MAKE
THIS OL'
LAMP DO A
DARN THING!!

HAH!!



THAT WAS AN ELECTRIC EYE
DEVICE TO OPEN THE WALL..
DON'T TELL ME YOU
BELIEVED IN
GENIUS, BUD?

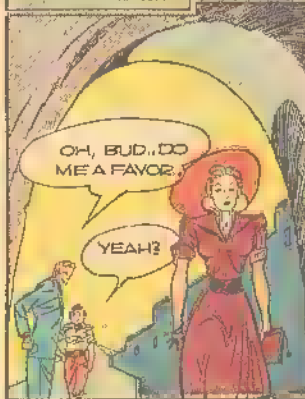
AW.. I WUZ
JUST KIDDIN'



JUST THEN, SUE SAUNDERS
PASSES...

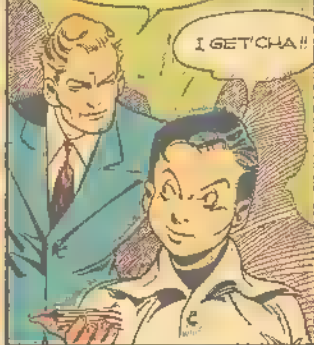
OH, BUD..DO
ME A FAVOR..

YEAH?



TAKE SOME OF THESE
PHOTOS TO SUE.. AND
GIVE HER THE
DOPE ON THE
STORY!!

I GET'CHA!!



LATER..

HELLO,
SAUNDERS

TEZZ!!
I THOUGHT
YOU WERE
DEAD!!

WELL IT DOESN'T
MATTER.. I GOT
THE EXCLUSIVE
ON MONSIEUR
LE RAT!!



OH, YOU MEAN THE
TALE ABOUT THE IDOL
WITH THE TELEVISION
EYES?

WHY, HOW
DID YOU.. YOU.
BLANKETY
BLANK...



LISTEN TO HER!!
THAT'S LOVE!! WELL SHE
SAID I WAS CUTE
DIDN'T SHE?



Don't miss the next exciting adventure of The Ray in the March issue of SMASH COMICS.

ESPIONAGE

STARRING BLACK X



ENEMY AGENTS, CARRYING OUT THEIR NEFARIOUS MISSIONS IN AMERICA ARE THE PREY OF THAT ACE SPY TRACKER, BLACK X WHO IS ASSISTED BY HIS PHENOMENAL HINDU MANSERVANT, BATU.

BY
WILL ERWIN

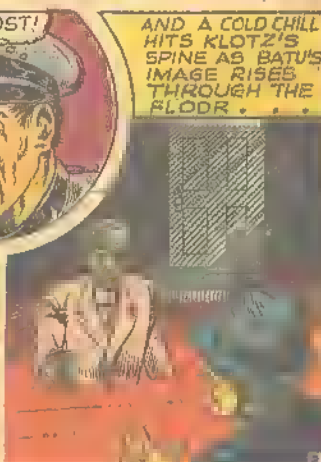
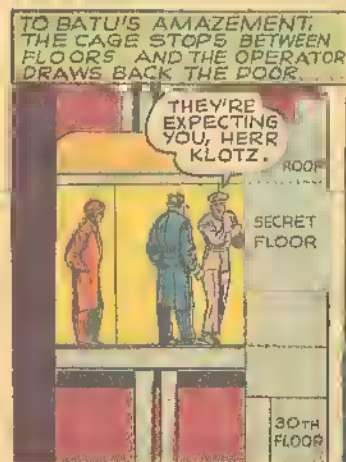
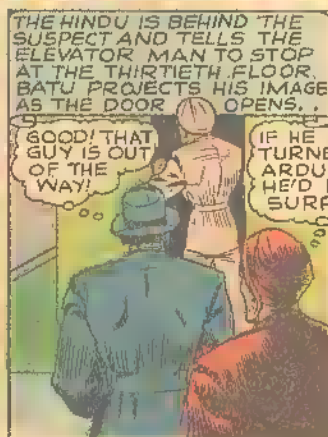
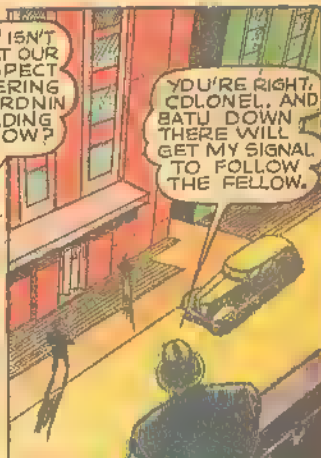


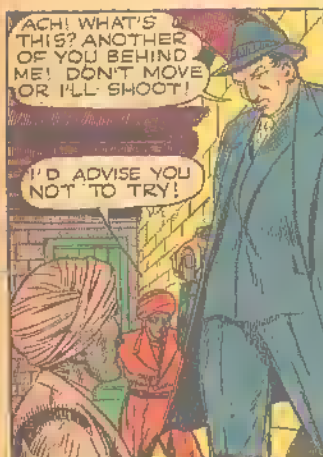
BLACK X AND HIS CHIEF ARE ON THE TRAIL OF A MYSTERIOUS RADIO STATION.

THAT'S STRANGE, COLONEL ATWATER. THE BROADCAST WAS SUDDENLY CUTOFF!

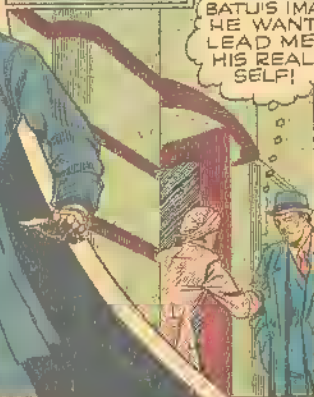
KEEP THE SET TUNED, BLACK X!

SAY! THAT PLANE IS CIRCLING OVER THE CRONIN BUILDING AGAIN. PECULIAR, EH?





MEANWHILE BLACK X IS STOPPED AS HE ENTERS THE BUILDING.



WHEN OTTO SWINGS FUTILELY AT THE HINDU SPIRIT, BLACK X CATCHES HIM OFF GUARD.



A FURIOUS FIGHT RAGES BETWEEN BATU AND THREE MEN ON THE SKYSCRAPER'S SUMMIT.



SOMEONE GUARDING THE EXIT. BUT I HEARD BATU'S VOICE AND HE'S HAVING TROUBLE UP THERE!



WITH A FLASHING MOVE, BLACK X. DISARMS THE GUARD

MADAME DOOM. OF ALL PEOPLE!



WHO'D YOU EXPECT TO FIND? OH, IT'S YOU, BLACK X!



FORCING THE FEMALE SPY BELOW, BLACK X STARTS DUSTING HIS KNUCKLES.



I GOT THIS ONE, BATU?

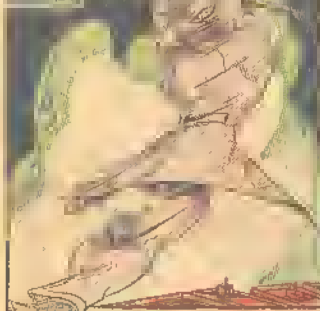
WATCH OUT? HERE COMES THAT PLANE AGAIN. THE PILOT HAS DROPPED A HOOK TO PICK UP THE RADIO TRANSMITTER. THROW IT DOWN THE STAIRS!



WITH HIS MOTOR CUT OFF, THE FLYER SKIMS A FEW FEET ABOVE THE TOWER.



SUDDENLY BATU PROJECTS HIS IMAGE TO GRASP THE DANGLING ROPE.



BUT THEIR OPPONENTS ATTACK AGAIN.

THIS NOOSE WILL MAKE YOU BEHAVE!



GOOD-BYE! IT'S THIRTY STORIES BELOW!

COLONEL ATWATER, WATCHING FROM THE OPPOSITE ROOF, SUMMONS A SQUAD OF G-MEN.



SEARCH THAT BUILDING FROM THE TOWER DOWN! BLACK X HAS FERRETED OUT SOME RATS?

BY THIS TIME THE SPY TRACKERS ARE TAKEN CAPTIVE.



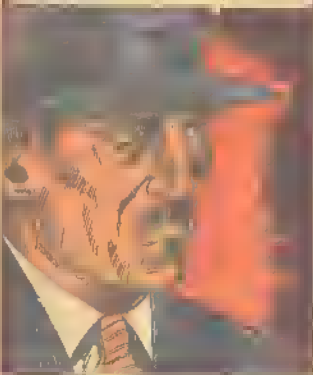
YOU WON'T GET OUT OF THAT CELL. THE WIRES ARE CHARGED WITH THREE THOUSAND VOLTS?

DON'T BE SO SURE OF YOURSELF, KLOTZ!

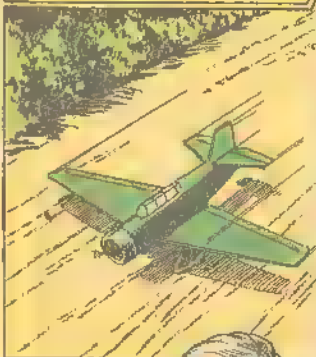
THE ARCHITECT OF THIS BUILDING WAS MY COUNTRYMAN, AND EVERY WORKMAN WHO KNEW ABOUT THE SECRET FLOOR MET WITH A SERIOUS ACCIDENT, SO THERE'S NO CHANCE OF OUR BEING FOUND OR FOR YOU TO ESCAPE!



TONIGHT OUR PLANE WILL RETURN TO PICK YOU UP WITH THE HOOK AND DROP YOU INTO THE SEA!



MEANWHILE THE SPY PILOT LANDS ON A PRIVATE AIRFIELD UNAWARE THAT BATU'S IMAGE IS ALIGHTING FROM THE PLANE.



GET BACK!
I'LL BLAST YOU! UH?
HE'S VANISHING...
LIKE SMOKE!



DIRECTED BY BATU'S UNCANNY WILL POWER, THE HINDU IMAGE RETURNS TO THE SECRET FLOOR.

HALT! YOU GOT LOOSE, EH? TAKE ANOTHER STEP AND I'LL KILL YOU! SAY...



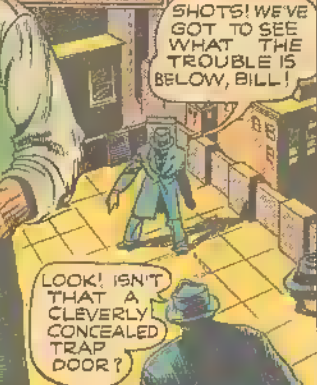
HE'S A GHOST! BULLETS CAN'T STOP HIM!



G-MEN ON THE ROOF WHIRL SUDDENLY.

SHOTS! WE'VE GOT TO SEE WHAT THE TROUBLE IS BELOW, BILL!

LOOK! ISN'T THAT A CLEVERLY CONCEALED TRAP DOOR?



BUT BATU'S IMAGE IMMUNE TO THE DEADLY VOLTAGE, RIPS AWAY THE WIRE CELL FRONT!



THREE SWIFT LEAPS AND BLACK X'S FIST HAMMERS INTO HIS CAPTOR.

LET'S CLEAR THE WAY, BATU! THE G-MEN ARE COMING!



PLUNGING DOWN FROM THE TRAP DOOR, THE F.B.I. MEN JOIN BLACK X IN A SQUEEZE PLAY.



DON'T SHOOT! WE SURRENDER!

DURING THE EXCITEMENT, MADAME DOOM BEATS THE ESPIONAGE AGENT INTO THE ELEVATOR.

ADIOS, BLACK X. I'LL SEE YOU LATER...AT YOUR FUNERAL!

BATU! HURRY! THAT SHE-DEVIL IS GETTING AWAY!

THEY RUSH OUT AND LEAP UNSEEN INTO BLACK X'S CAR.

THERE SHE GOES, MASTER... IN A FAST CAR!

WE'VE HANDCUFFED THE WHOLE LOT OF 'EM, COLONEL ATWATER... THEY'LL GET STIFF SENTENCES FOR VIOLATION OF THE ESPIONAGE ACT. WHAT BECAME OF YOUR SECRET AGENT AND HIS HINDU?

SEARCH ME!

SPEEDING TEN MILES OUTSIDE THE CITY, BLACK X FINALLY OVERTAKES THE WOMAN SPY.

EAT HERE

SHE'S TURNING IN THERE, BATU... AND THAT SAME PLANE IS BEHIND THE ROAD SHACK!

CAN YOU BEAT THAT? MADAME DOOM SLUGGED THE PILOT AND TOOK OFF IN HIS SHIP! SHE LOOKS OUT FOR HERSELF, ALL RIGHT!

WAIT TILL I GET THAT WOMAN!

YES, BUT WE'VE GOT TO LOOK OUT FOR THAT MAN. HE'S GOT A PISTOL!

DROP THE ARTILLERY, ACE, AND SPILL THE LOWDOWN!

OKAY, BLACK X... ONLY DON'T HIT ME LIKE THAT AGAIN. I'LL TELL YOU PLENTY ABOUT THAT SPY MOB AND THEIR SECRET MESSAGES TO EUROPE. I'M AN EX-CONVICT AND THEY WERE PAYING ME. OKAY... BUT THAT DAME PULLED A NIFTY DOUBLECROSS!

LATER, BLACK X JOINS COLONEL ATWATER IN THEIR FAVORITE CAFE.

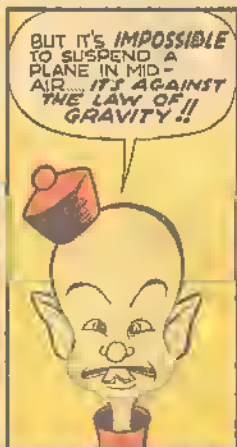
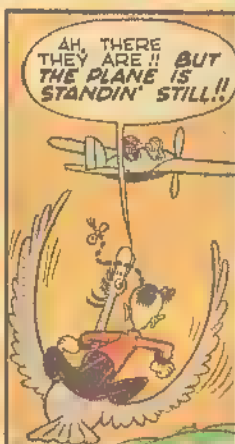
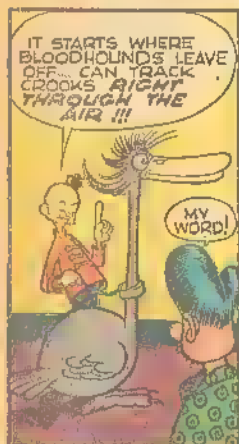
YES... AS USUAL... IF MADAME DOOM FLEW, SHE THE COOP? I'LL GET HER SOME DAY! DOESN'T GET YOU FIRST?

WUN CLOO

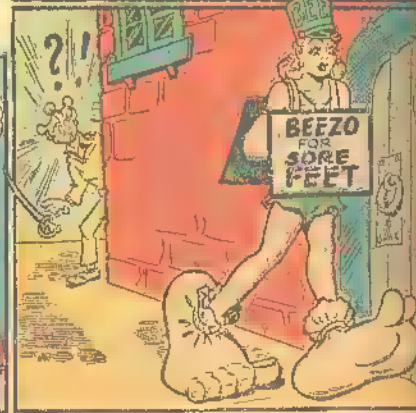
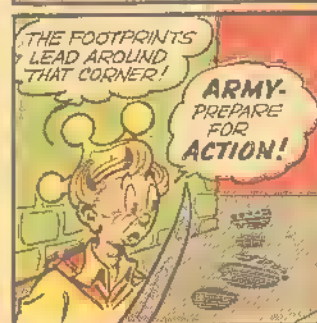
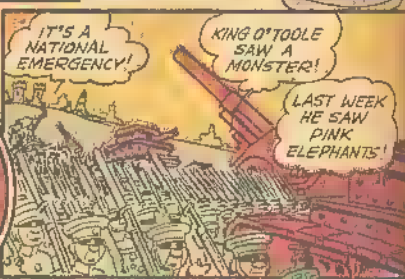
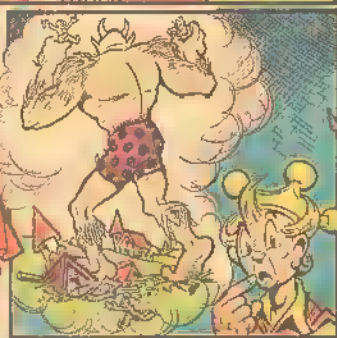
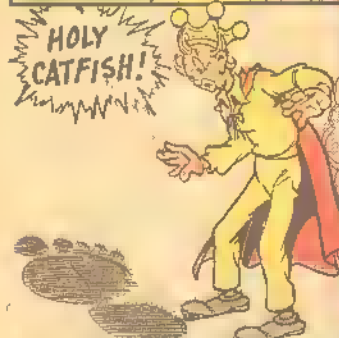
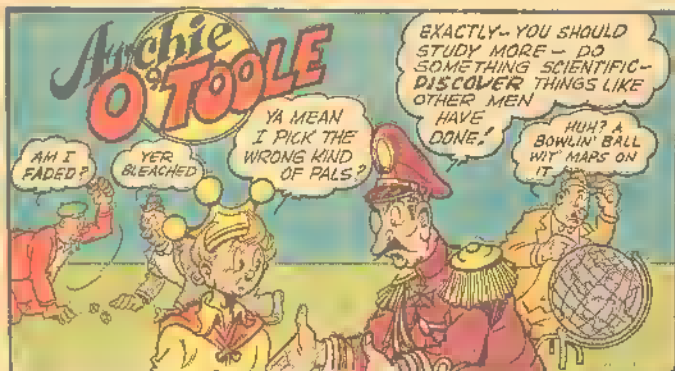


by Ralph Johns

THE DEFECTIVE DETECTIVE



Enjoy Wun Cloo in the March issue of SMASH COMICS.



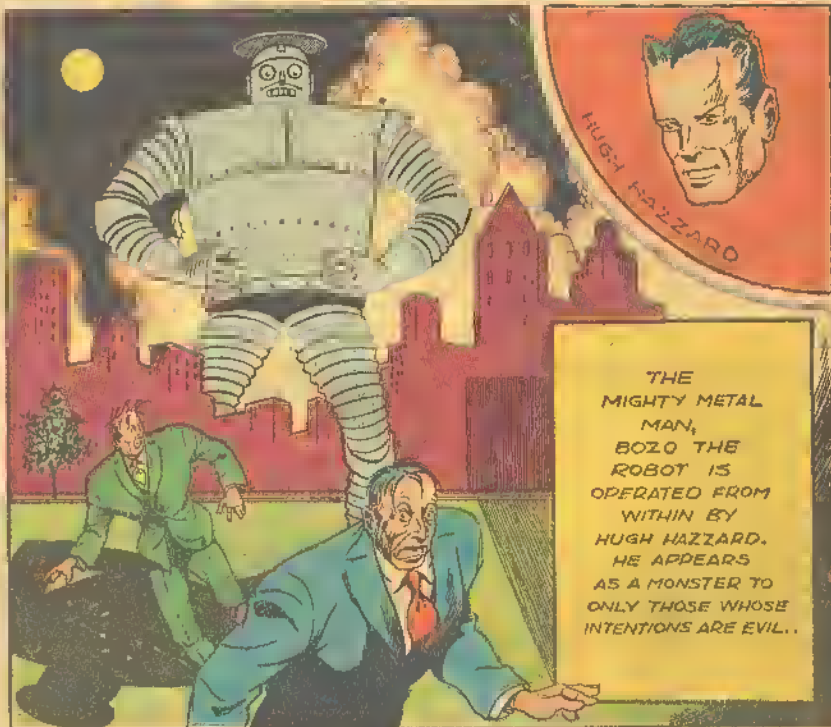
Archie O'Toole will amuse you in the March issue of SMASH COMICS.

B THE ROBOT

BOZO

by

WAYNE
REID.



THE
MIGHTY METAL
MAN,
BOZO THE
ROBOT IS
OPERATED FROM
WITHIN BY
HUGH HAZZARD.
HE APPEARS
AS A MONSTER TO
ONLY THOSE WHOSE
INTENTIONS ARE EVIL..

THE PROTECTING SHADOWS
OF NIGHT GROW DEEPER AS
THE PEOPLE OF CENTER
CITY SLUMBER---

AND INSIDE ONE OF THE
CITY'S LARGEST DEFENSE
CORPORATIONS, GRIM SABO-
TEURS ARE AT WORK---



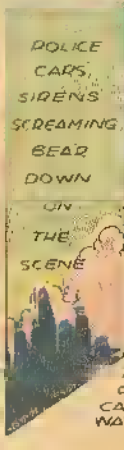
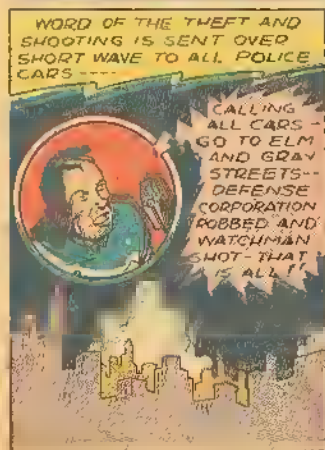
TAKE
IT EASY,
KURT--
WE'VE GOT
ALL NIGHT--

JA, ERIC--I
ALWAYS FORGET--
THIS NEW GLYCER-
INE EXPLOSIVE
OF YOURS GOES
OFF WITHOUT
ANY NOISE---



DIGHT--AND THAT WAY WE
CAN GO ON STEALING PLANS AND
INFORMATION FOR THE HOMELAND
WITHOUT RISK OF OUR BEING
DISCOVERED UNTIL THE FOOL
WATCHMAN FINDS IT OUT. BY THAT
TIME IT IS TOO LATE AND WE
ARE SAFELY IN HIDING!!





AND INSIDE HIS STRANGE, INDESTRUCTIBLE CREATURE, HAZZARD STREAKS TOWARD THE DEFENSE PLANT...

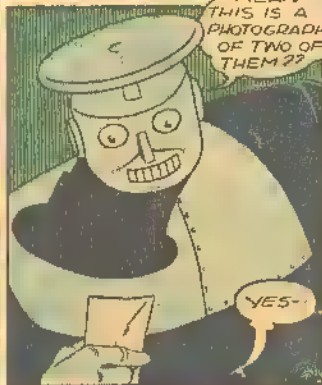


PICTURE
IN--WALLET

AND SECONDS LATER HE RACES TOWARD THE FALLEN GUARD, WELL AHEAD OF THE POLICE---

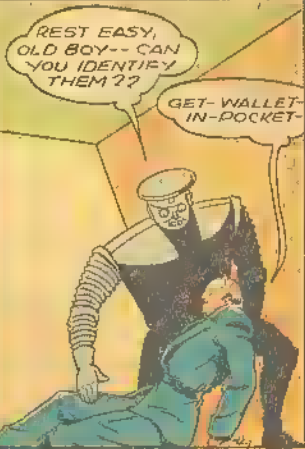


HE'S
MOVING--



YOU
MEAN
THIS IS A
PHOTOGRAPH
OF TWO OF
THEM??

YES--



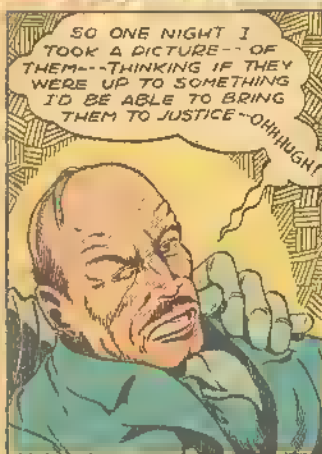
REST EASY,
OLD BOY-- CAN
YOU IDENTIFY
THEM??

GET--WALLET--
IN--POCKET--

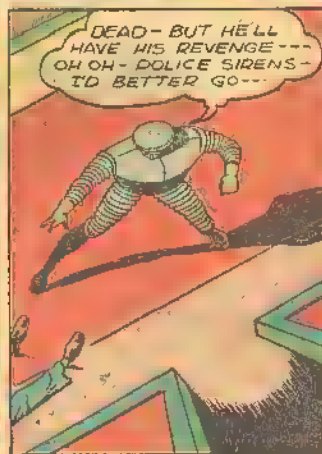


HOW COME
YOU HAVE
THIS??

PAST TWO
WEEKS-- I
NOTICED THESE
SAME TWO
GUYS WATCHING
THIS PLACE--



SO ONE NIGHT I
TOOK A PICTURE-- OF
THEM-- THINKING IF THEY
WERE UP TO SOMETHING
I'D BE ABLE TO BRING
THEM TO JUSTICE-- OH--HUGH!



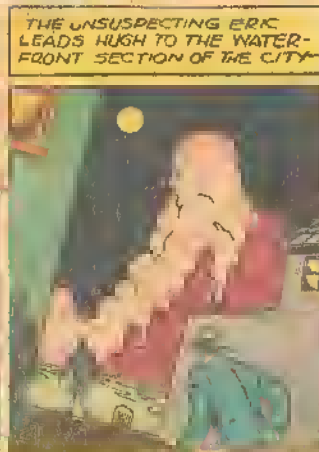
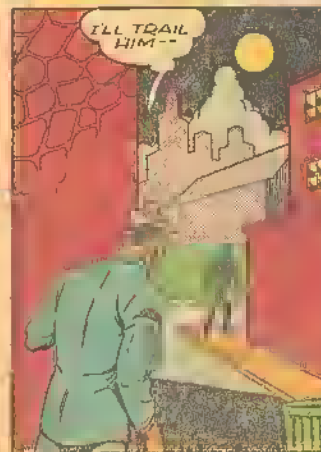
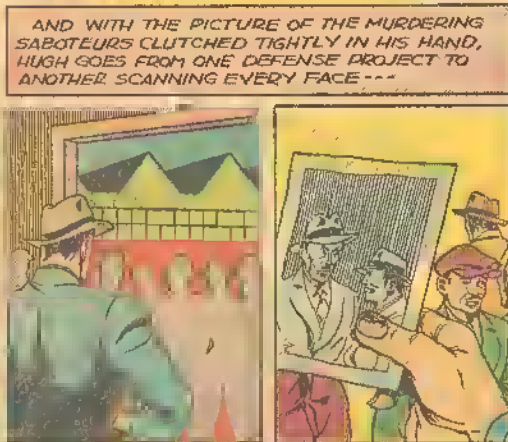
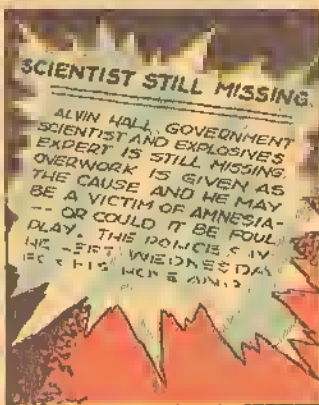
DEAD-- BUT HE'LL
HAVE HIS REVENGE---
OH OH-- POLICE SIRENS--
I'D BETTER GO---



AND ONCE MORE THE
MIGHTY, METAL MONSTER
STREAKS THROUGH THE SKY--

THE NEXT DAY HUGH HAZZARD
READS A NEWSPAPER ACCOUNT
OF THE CASE ---

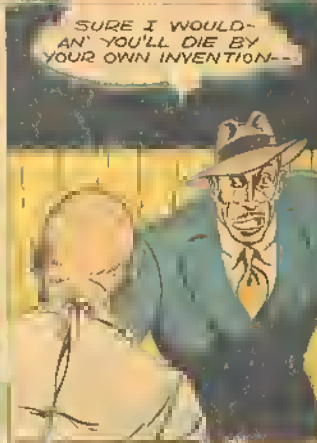
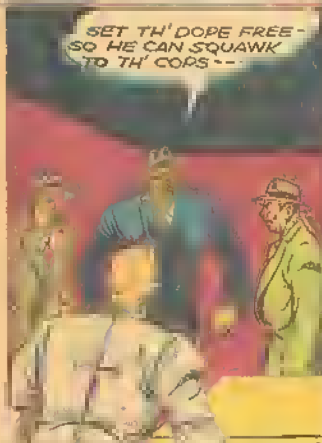
AND ANOTHER ITEM CATCHES
THE EYE OF HAZZARD---

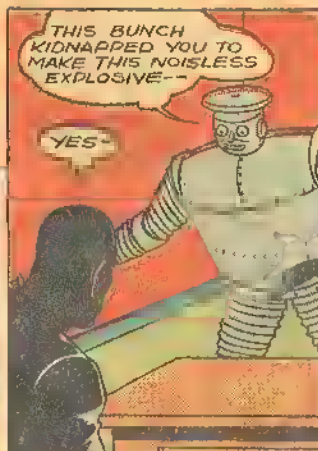


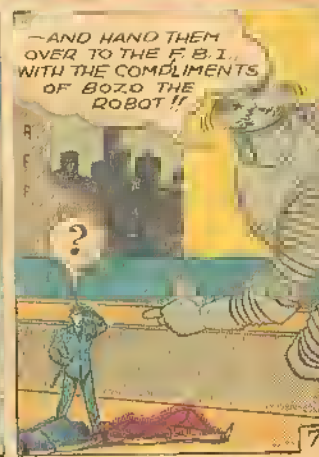
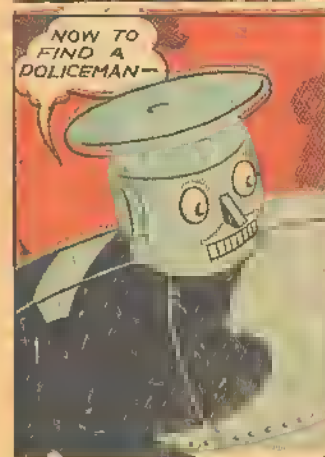
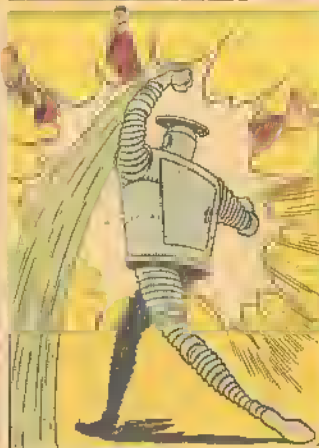
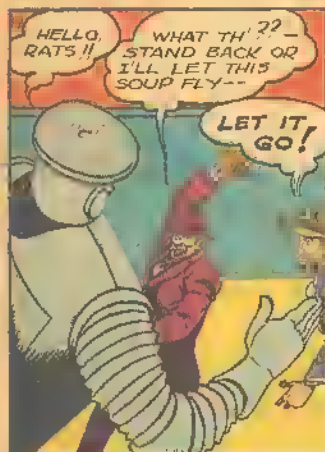
"FROM BENEATH HIS COAT
LAPEL HE GRABS HIS CONTROL
BOARD AND SUMMONS THE
IRON MAN ----



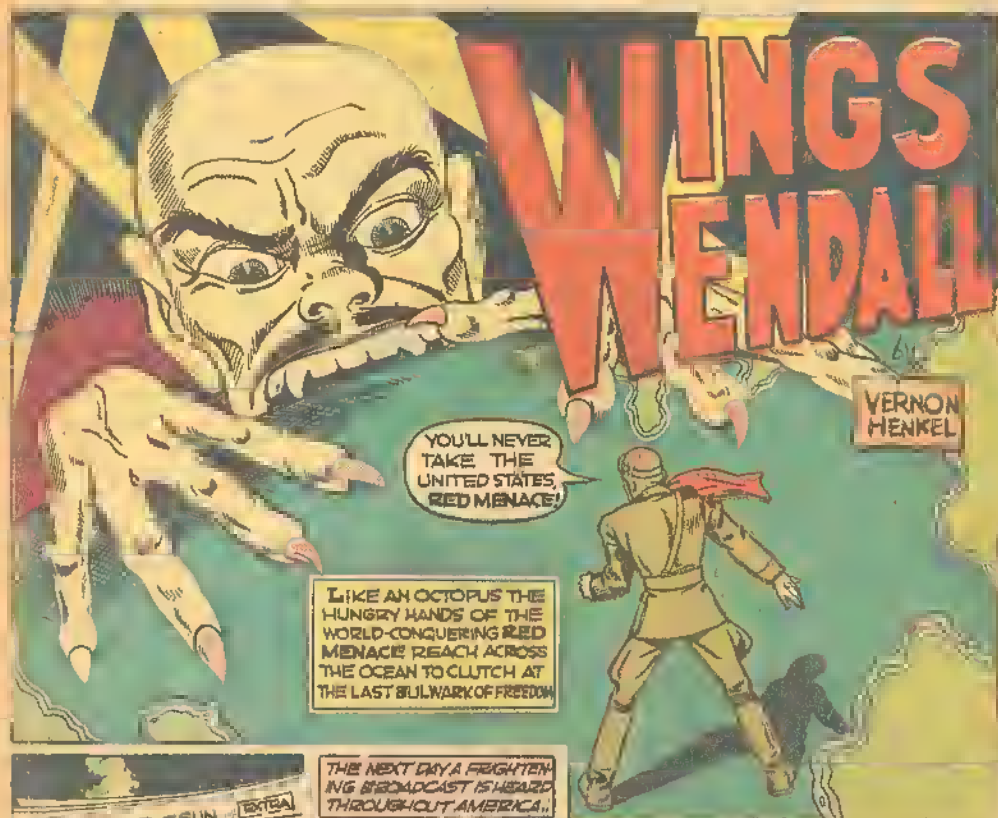
AT THE SAME TIME ON THE
TOP FLOOR OF THE WARE-
HOUSE ----







Another sensational episode of Bozo The Robot in the March issue of SMASH COMICS.



VERNON
HENKEL

LIKE AN OCTOPUS THE HUNGRY HANDS OF THE WORLD-CONQUERING RED MENACE REACH ACROSS THE OCEAN TO CLUTCH AT THE LAST BULWARK OF FREEDOM

THE NEXT DAY A FRIGHTENING BROADCAST IS HEARD THROUGHOUT AMERICA...

PEOPLE OF AMERICA, YOU ARE FOOLS TO TRY TO FIGHT THE RED MENACE! I WILL SHOW YOU MY POWER BEFORE THE SUN RISES TO-MORROW, SAN FRANCISCO WILL BE WIPED FROM THE FACE OF THE EARTH!

TO ONE MAN, ROARING ACROSS THE U.S.A. IN THE NIGHT, THOSE WORDS WERE A PERSONAL CHALLENGE... WINGS WENDALL RACES TO STOP HIS ARCH ENEMY!

WORLD & SUN
DEADLY ATOMIC BOMB INVENTED IN ORIENT
I MAKE EXISTING EXPLOSIVES SEEM HARMLESS!!

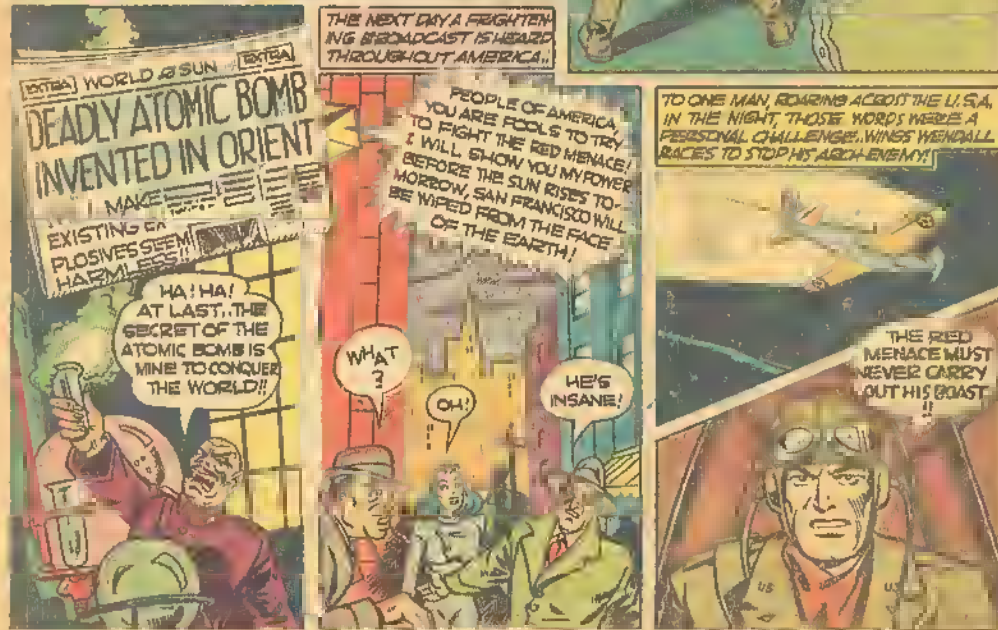
HA! HA! AT LAST... THE SECRET OF THE ATOMIC BOMB IS MINE TO CONQUER THE WORLD!!

WHAT?

OH!

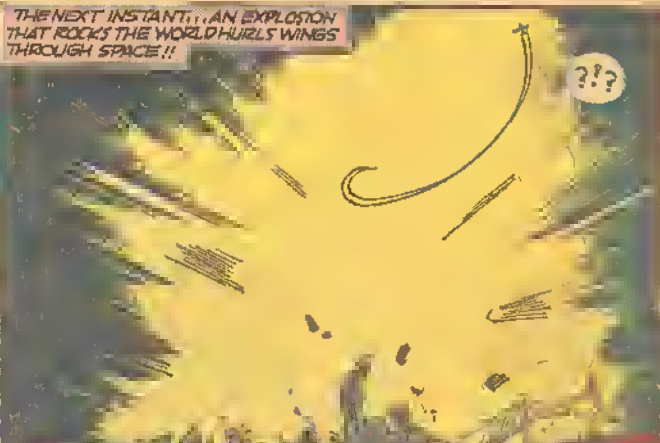
HE'S INSANE!

THE RED MENACE MUST NEVER CARRY OUT HIS BOAST!!





THE NEXT INSTANT... AN EXPLOSION THAT ROCKS THE WORLD HURLS WINGS THROUGH SPACE!!



THEN DOWN, DOWN PLUMMETS THE PURSUIT SHIP... THE RUSHING WIND REVIVES ITS OCCUPANT



DAZED AND HALF-BELIEVING WINGS STARES AT A GIGANTIC PIT WHERE A MOMENT AGO STOOD A GREAT CITY...



GREAT GUN! THE INFLOWING WATERS OF THE PACIFIC IS FORMING A LAKE TO COVER THE GRAVES OF THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE!



ATOMIC POWER IS THE ONLY THING CAPABLE OF SUCH DESTRUCTION... AND THE RED MENACE MUST BE USING THAT IN HIS NEW BOMBS!!



THE NEXT DAY AS CONGRESS FACES THE FEARFUL DEMAND OF SURRENDER WINGS WENDALL ARRIVES WITH HIS REPORT...

WE CAN'T FIGHT A THING LIKE THIS... THEY'LL BLOW THE COUNTRY TO PIECES!



SILENCE! I WANT TO PRESENT THE ONLY EYE-WITNESS TO THE DISASTER!!

GENTLEMEN, IT WILL TAKE THOUSANDS OF THOSE BOMBS TO WIPE OUT AMERICA... EVEN THE LOSS OF OUR CITIES CANNOT DEFEAT US! WE MUST EVACUATE OUR CITIES UNTIL WE FIND AND DESTROY THOSE BOMBS!



THE NATION ACCEPTS WING'S HENDILL'S
MIGRATION PLAN AND SOON ALL THE
LARGE CITIES ARE DESERTED..



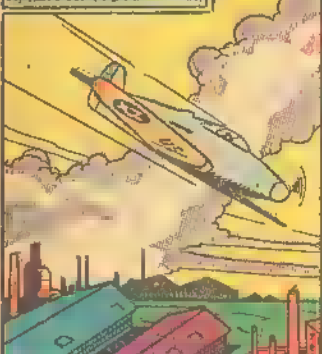
BUT THE RED MENACE
KNOWS THAT WE CANNOT
FIGHT OFF AN INVASION
WITHOUT THOSE INDUSTRIES
I MUST LEARN HIS SECRET
QUARTERS BEFORE HE CAN
DESTROY THEM!!



DIANE WESTCOTT?
WHAT'S UP
DIANE?



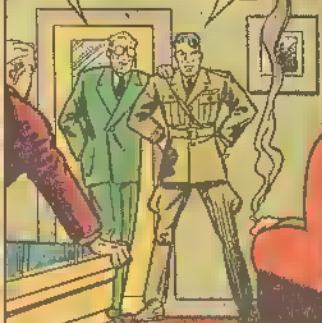
AMERICA'S GREATEST DEFENSE
INDUSTRY, THE WESTCOTT ARMS
FACTORY IS STRANGELY SILENT
WHEN WINGS ARRIVES..



GOOD HEAVENS!
WHY ISN'T THE
PLANT RUNNING?
THESE ARE
WAR TIMES!



WINGS!
I'M GLAD
YOU'RE
HERE!!



SOME OF THE WORKERS
ARE KICKING.. SAY THEY
AREN'T GETTING ENOUGH
FOR THE RISK INVOLVED,
THE REST OF THE COMPANY
TOOK UP THE CRY AND
HERE WE ARE!

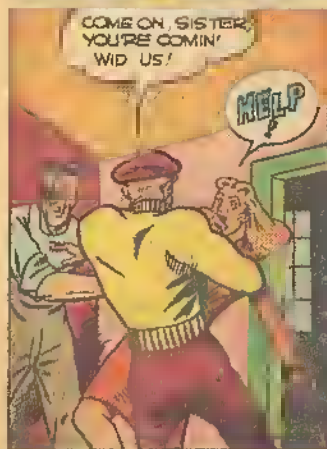


RISK?
SURE IT'S RISKY
BUT BETTER
THAN A LIFETIME
OF SLAVERY..
WHICH YOU'LL
GET IF THE
RED MENACE
TAKES OVER!



WINGS WENDALL DIVES INTO THE CROWD
OF STRIKERS..





WINGS WENDALL LIFTS HIS POWERFUL PURSUIT PLANE OFF THE GROUND

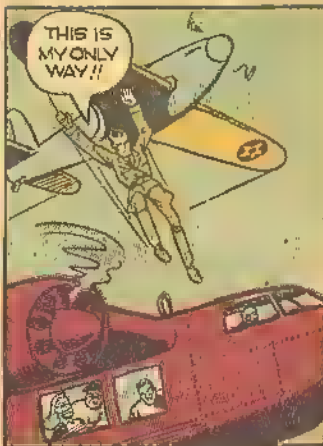
THEY WERE
HEADED IN
THIS DIRECTION!



THERE THEY ARE
STRAIGHT AHEAD...BUT
I CAN'T SHOOT THEM
DOWN WITH DIANE
IN THAT PLANE!



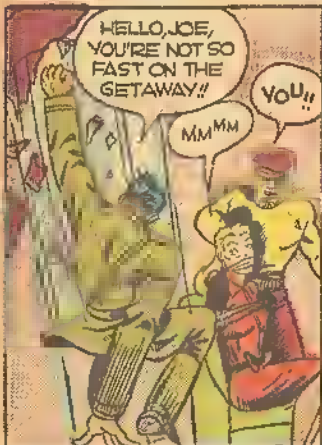
THIS IS
MY ONLY
WAY!!



HELLO, JOE,
YOU'RE NOT SO
FAST ON THE
GETAWAY!!

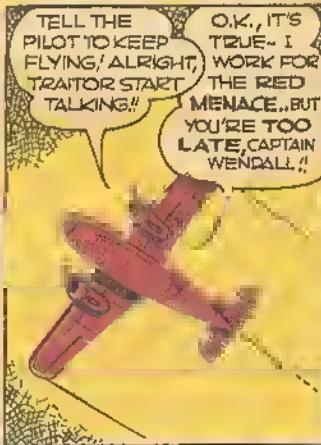
YOU!!

MMMM



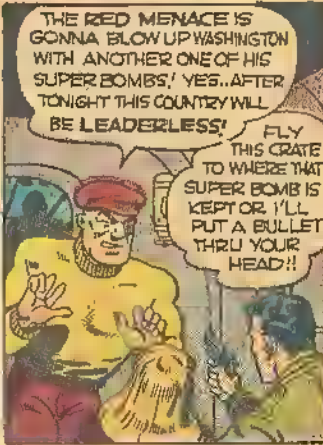
TELL THE
PILOT TO KEEP
FLYING! ALRIGHT,
TRAITOR START
TALKING!!

O.K., IT'S
TRUE- I
WORK FOR
THE RED
MENACE...BUT
YOU'RE TOO
LATE, CAPTAIN
WENDALL!!

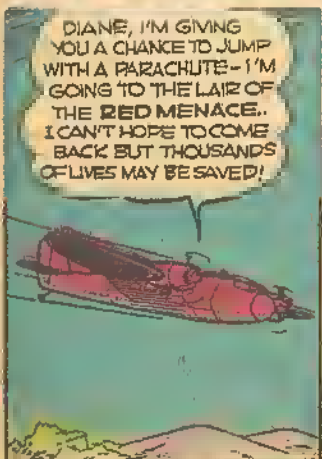


THE RED MENACE IS
GONNA BLOW UP WASHINGTON
WITH ANOTHER ONE OF HIS
SUPER BOMBS! YES...AFTER
TONIGHT THIS COUNTRY WILL
BE LEADERLESS!

FLY
THIS CRATE
TO WHERE THAT
SUPER BOMB IS
KEPT OR I'LL
PUT A BULLET
THRU YOUR
HEAD!!



DIANE, I'M GIVING
YOU A CHANCE TO JUMP
WITH A PARACHUTE- I'M
GOING TO THE LAIR OF
THE RED MENACE..
I CAN'T HOPE TO COME
BACK BUT THOUSANDS
OF LIVES MAY BE SAVED!



NO! I'M
GOING WITH
YOU, WINGS!



THE PLANE SPEEDS ON UNTIL AT
LAST IT REACHES A CAMOUFLAGED
LANDING FIELD IN THE OZARKS...



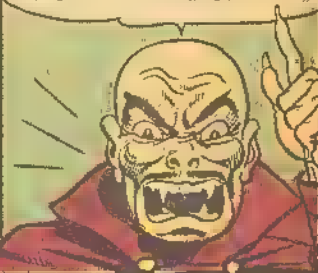
BUT AS HE LANDS, THE PILOT CATCHES WINGS OFF GUARD, AND JERKS THE SHIP INTO A "WING-OVER"...



THE WARNING BRINGS THE RED MENACE AND HIS GUARDS ON THE RUN



HA-HA-HA! THE GREAT WINGS WENDALL IS SENTIMENTAL... WELL I HAVE A BEAUTIFUL PLAN SO YOU CAN BE TOGETHER UNTIL THE END... I'LL TIE YOU BOTH TO THE ATOMIC BOMB TO BE BLOWN TO BITS WITH THE REST OF WASHINGTON D.C.!!



THE RED MENACE'S FIENDISH ORDERS ARE CARRIED OUT AND THE HUGE BOMB CARRYING PLANE TAKES OFF



AFTER A FLIGHT THAT SEEMS LIKE AN ETERNITY THE BOMBER-PILOT REACHES FOR THE BOMB RELEASE



A SECOND LATER AND IT WOULD HAVE BEEN THE END, DIANE!!



BACK IN THE OZARK MOUNTAINS...



LATER...



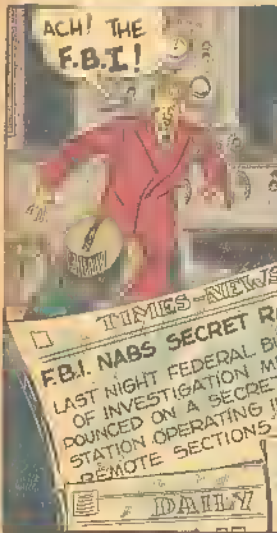
INVISIBLE JUSTICE

by ART GORDON

THROUGH THE TIGHTLY DRAWN WEB OF THE F.B.I. FOREIGN AGENTS PLOT DEVILISH WAYS OF DISRUPTING NATIONAL DEFENSE... BUT A DREADED FIGURE STANDS READY TO FILL THE GAPS... IT IS KENT THORNTON, THE INVISIBLE HOOP.



ACH! THE F.B.I.!



WE'LL TAKE THOSE PAPERS, THORNTON!

I'M SO PROUD OF YOU, FATHER!

EXTRA!
CONTACT MAN
SEIZED WITH
INFORMATION FOR
FOREIGN AGENTS

AMERICA'S GREATEST
SCIENTIFIC MIND TO
WORK FOR U.S.

IN A SECRET LABORATORY KNOWN ONLY TO ARMY MEN PROFESSOR AMOS WATSON TODAY STARTED WORK ON A NEW WAR DEVICE WHICH IS HOPE TO BE OF



IN AN OLD TENEMENT...

ROGAR! I
KNOW WHERE
PROFESSOR
WATSON'S
SECRET
LABORATORY
IS...

WHAT? GOOD...
NOW WE MUST
CONTACT OUR
NEAREST
AGENT!



BUT HOW? THE
F.B.I. IS GUARDING
US CLOSELY...
ALL CONTACT
MEN ARE
SURE TO
BE CAUGHT!

YES -
BUT
THERE
MUST BE A
WAY...**WAIT!**
I HAVE IT!



NEXT DAY

I'M JANE
WATSON--
I GOT YOUR
NOTE...WHAT
HAVE YOU TO
TELL ME!

WE KNOW THE
WHEREABOUTS
OF YOUR
LONG
LOST
BROTHER!



OH-

THE SHOCK
WAS TOO
GREAT--
SHE'S
GOING TO
FAINT--

EXACTLY
WHAT I
WANT...



QUICK! WE MUST WORK FAST.
SHE'LL BE AROUND IN A
MINUTE...MISS WATSON
DOES NOT KNOW IT, BUT
SHE IS GOING TO BE OUR
CONTACT MAN...OR IS
IT GIRL-- HAHHA!



LATER

I'M SO
SORRY--
NOW WHAT
ABOUT
TOM
TELL ME!

WE ARE GOING TO
GIVE YOU AN
ADDRESS AND
A PASSWORD
- LISTEN -



OUTSIDE THE TENEMENT...

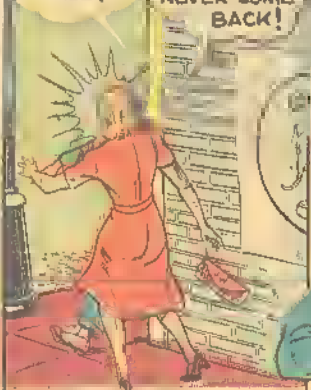
GREAT
SCOTT!
JANE
WATSON
HAS BEEN
UP TO SEE
ROGAR!
THE SPY!

SO WHAT? SHE COULDN'T
TELL HIM ANYTHING AS
SHE DOESN'T KNOW
WHERE HER FATHER
IS WORKING...AND IF
ROGAR DOES FIND OUT
HE'LL NEVER BE
ABLE TO PASS THE
WORD...HE'LL BE
HIM CLOSELY!



OH! SORRY,
MISS!

THE DEAD
NEVER COME
BACK!



IT'S JANE WATSON AND
SHE DIDN'T EVEN NOTICE
THE DEAD NEVER COME--
WHAT DID SHE MEAN??
SHE MUST BE IN TROUBLE--
I'LL FOLLOW AND SEE



AS JANE GETS INTO HER CAR THERE IS AN UNSEEN PASSENGER BESIDE HER... IT'S THE INVISIBLE HOOD....

I HOPE I FIND DEAR TOM!

SO! IT'S ABOUT HER BROTHER TOM WHO DISAPPEARED YEARS AGO AFTER A FAMILY ARGUMENT!

LATER-IN THE WOODY WILDS...

THERE'S THE HOUSE WHAT A GLOOMY PLACE!

THE RICKETY DOOR CREAKS OPEN...

COME IN!

WELL! SPEAK UP, MISS-WHAT DO YOU WANT?

THE DEAD NEVER COME BACK--

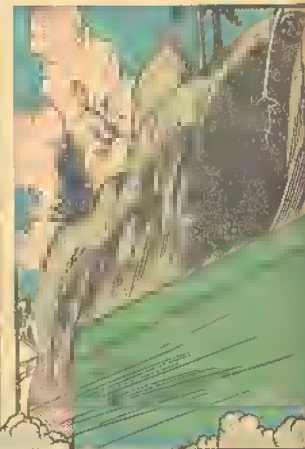
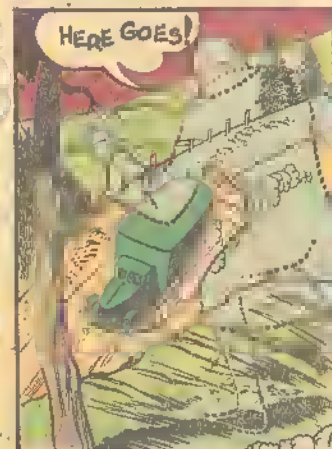
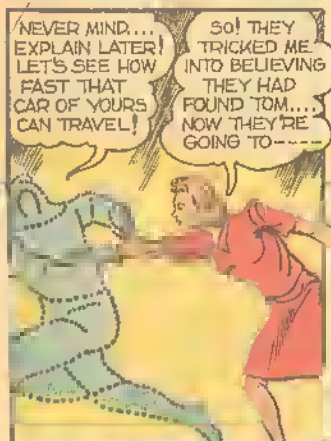
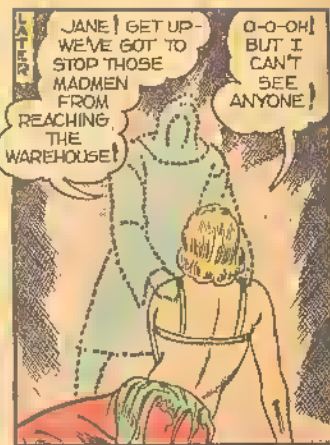
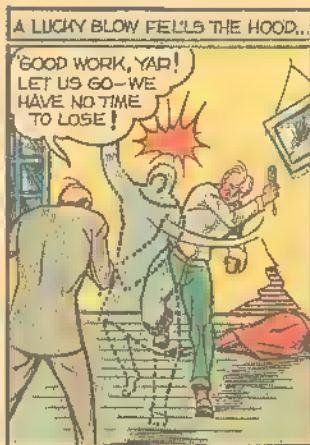
THE DEAD NEVER COME BACK-- BACK, YAR! DID YOU HEAR THAT?

SUDDENLY YAR LEAPS AT THE BEWILDERED GIRL...

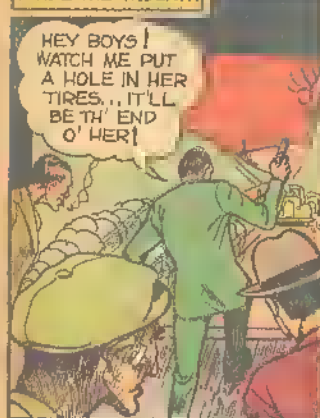
HOLD HER STILL YAR-I'VE GOT THE SOLUTION READY!

AND AS THE ASTONISHED HOOD LOOKS ON, HE SEES...

THE MESSAGE HAS COME THROUGH--THE INVISIBLE INK WORKED... WE GO NOW TO CARRY OUT OUR ORDERS-- AS FOR YOU... TAKE THAT!



INSIDE THE TRUCK...



SUDDENLY...



IT CAN'T BE--!

GHOSTS!

SO! YOU WERE
GOING TO WRECK
HER CAR, EH?
WHY YOU
INHUMAN--
TAKE THAT!

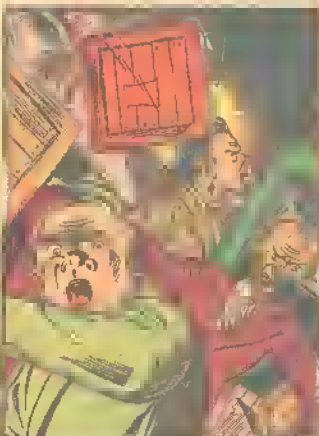


THEN--AS THE FOREIGN AGENT
DRIVES...



STOP
THIS
TRUCK!

YOU'LL NEVER
GET ME... I'LL WRECK
THIS TRUCK FIRST...
HA-HA-HA-HA!



UGH! I CAN'T LOOK!
POOR MR. NOBODY
WAS AMONG THEM--
WHAT'S THAT?

JUST
MR.
NOBODY!



I'M SO GLAD--
I THOUGHT...
AND NOW
MAYBE YOU'LL
BECOME
'SOMEBODY'!

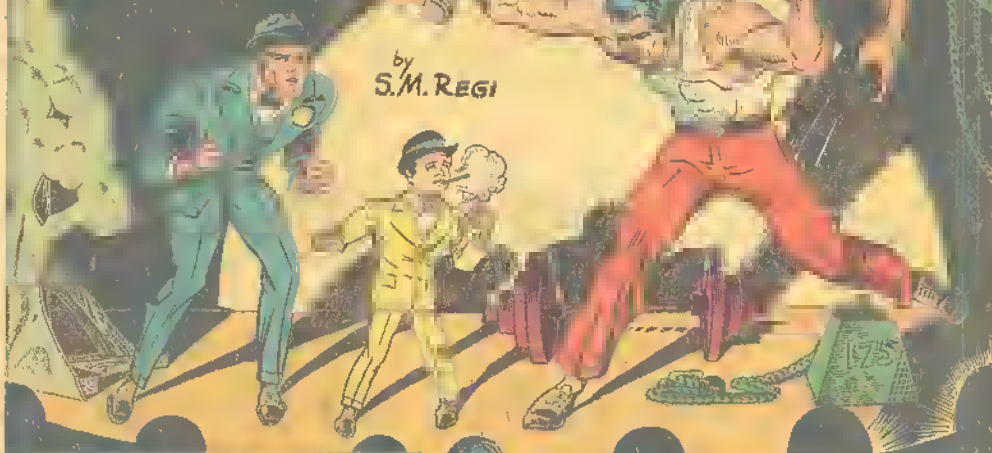
I'LL SAY!
BUT
COME TO
THINK OF IT,
I DIDN'T
COME SO FAR
FROM ACTUALLY
BECOMING A
NOBODY--
WHEN!



Watch for the next episode of Invisible Justice in the March issue of SMASH COMICS.

The PURPLE TRIO

by
S.M. REGI



WHEN THE PURPLE TRIO HITS CAMP CRAIG, THE BOYS GET MORE OF A SHOW THAN THEY EXPECT. FOR ROCKY, THE STRONG MAN, WARREN, THE VENTRILOQUIST AND TINY, THE LITTLE MAN, ARE IN FIGHTING FORM.

HERE THEY ARE, FELLAS! THE PURPLE TRIO IN PERSON. ROCKY, WARREN... AND OH, YEAH, I NEARLY FORGOT... TINY. HE'S THE BRAINS UNDER ROCKY'S MUSCLE!

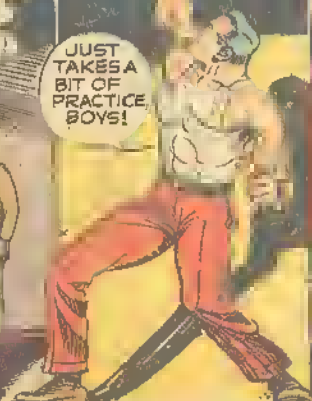
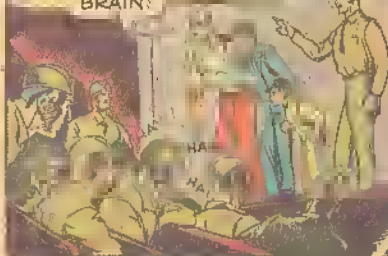
FELLAS! FIRST I'M GONNA TRY HEAVIN' A 500 POUND BARBELL WITHOUT SMASHING TOO MUCH OF TINY'S BRAIN!

JUST TAKES A BIT OF PRACTICE, BOYS!

UNAWARE OF THE HULKING FIGURE BEHIND THEM A COUPLE OF FELLOWS SWAP COMMENTS.

WE OUGHT TO MATCH HIM — AGAINST BULL KARTEN, EH, JIM?

I'LL SAY! THAT BULLY DESERVES A GOOD SHEL-LACKING!



IN A COLD RAGE, BULL BREAKS UP THE CHAT.

JUST A WISE GUY, EH?

AW, FORGET IT, BULL...! WUZ ONLY KIDDING!

HEY WARREN, THROW YOUR VOICE AND HAVE ROCKY CHALLENGE THAT MUGG...

O.K., TINY. WATCH ROCKY'S FACE TURN RED!

AND TO ROCKY'S ASTONISHMENT,

O.K., YOUNG FELLA. HOW ABOUT TRYIN' THAT TOUGH STUFF UP HERE WITH SOMEONE YOU MIGHT NOT LIKK...

WHY THAT NO-GOOD VOICE CHISLER!

GO ON, BULL...

NOT SCARED ARE YOU, BULL...?

SHOW HIM GOOD FIGHTIN', ROCKY!

EMBARRASSED INTO ACCEPTANCE OF THE CHALLENGE, BULL GETS ON THE STAGE.

I'LL GIVE HIM SOMETHIN' TO REMEMBER...

WITH MIGHTY FORCE, ROCKY TOSSES BULL FOR A LOOP

I'M GONNA TEAR YOU APART, BUDDY, FOR PUTTIN' ME TO ALL THIS TROUBLE!

YOU'VE GOT A FIGHT ON YOUR HANDS, BULL...

I'LL FIX HIM, BRAINS! JUST WATCH ME!

HE'S GONNA FIGHT PLENTY DIRTY ROCKY! WATCH HIM, HE'S MEAN!

ENRAGED, BULL TRIES A
FLYING TACKLE.



BUT ROCKY'S READY FOR
THE CATCH.



HOISTING HIS STUNNED
OPPONENT ABOVE HIS
HEAD, THE STRONG MAN
CARRIES HIM TO CENTER
STAGE.



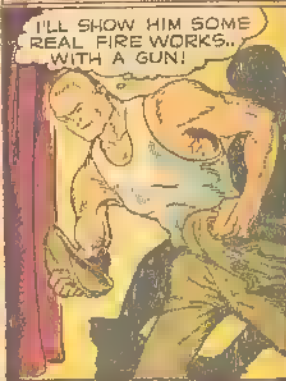
AND INTRODUCES
BULL TO THE
FERRIS WHEEL
TWIRL.



THE WINNER TAKES A BOW
AMID DEAFENING CHEERS.



BUT BULL IS A SORE LOSER.



TINY IS
CONVENIENTLY
WITHIN EAR-
SHOT.



HEY, WARREN,
GET A PINCH-HIT-
TER. I GOT SOME-
THIN' BOILIN'.

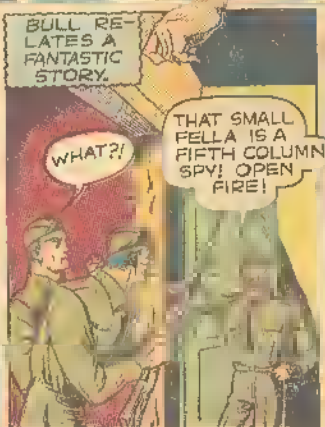


AND HE TRAILS
BULL TO THE
BARRACKS.

I'LL SHOOT THAT LUG
HIGH AND WIDE.



LOADIN'
HIS GUN,
HE
MEANS
IT!



BREATHLESS, HE REACHES THE STAGE. . .

C'MON, TINY, WE'LL HAVE TO SEW HIM UP!

THAT GUY'S NUTS, HE'S GOT THE SENTRY TAKIN' POT SHOTS AT ME!

BUT BULL HAS FOUND A CAR AND IS MAKING A MAD DASH FOR THE CAMP GATES.

I'VE HAD MY FILL OF THIS TIN-SOLDIER BUNK!

THE TRIO ARRIVES IN TIME TO SEE SOME QUICK SENTRY ACTION. . .

O.K. BOYS, LET'S GO AFTER HIM!

RIGHT WITH YOU, TINY!

IN A FAST JEEP CAR, TINY DRIVES IN PURSUIT. . .

DON'T LET HIM GET AWAY, BRAINS!

A DEAFENING ROAR SPLITS THE AIR AS BULL'S SPEEDING AUTO CRASHES THROUGH THE LOCKED GATES.

AND COMING AHEAD OF BULL'S CAR. . .

TAKE THE WHEEL, WARREN!

TINY MAKES A SPECTACULAR LEAP TO JOIN THE FLEEING SOLDIER. . .

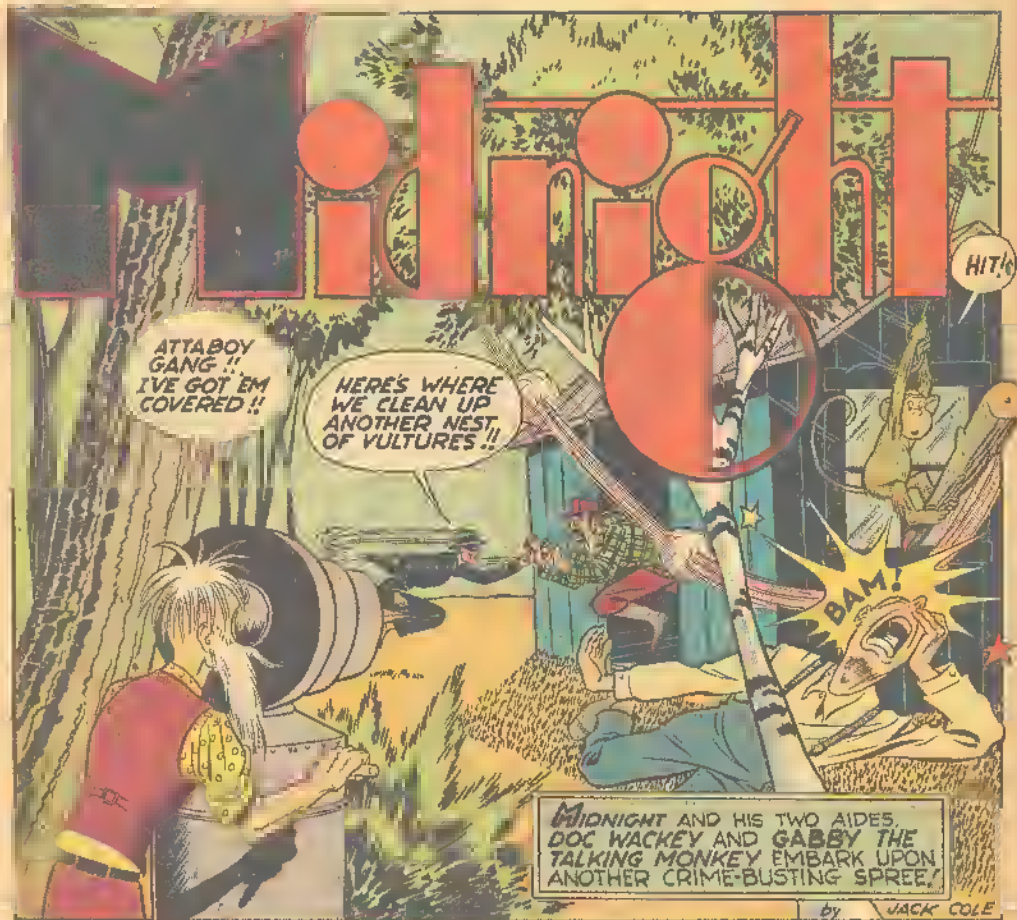
OH, HOW I LOVE YOU, BIG BOY!

THEY SMASH INTO A STONE WALL.

IN THE BACK SEAT, BIG-TIME! IF YOUR EYES WERE OPEN WE'D MAKE YOU WALK!

BACK ON THE CAMP STAGE WITH THE SENSELESS BULLY. . .

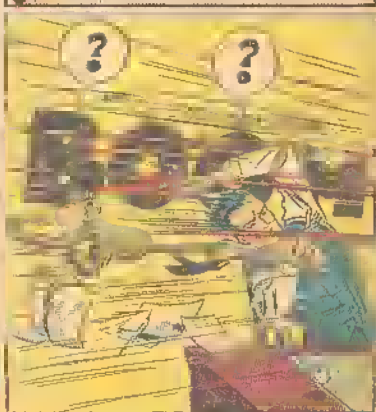
SEE, FELLERS? THE BIGGER THEY ARE, THE HARDER THEY FALL!



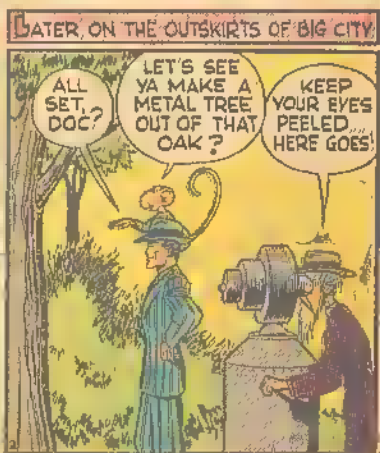
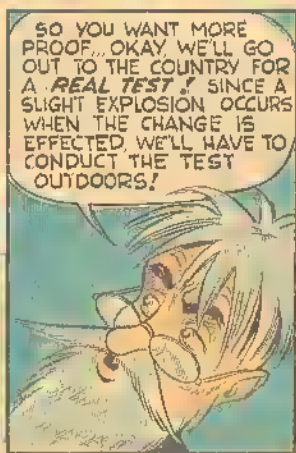
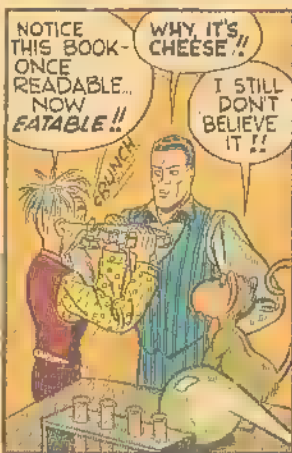
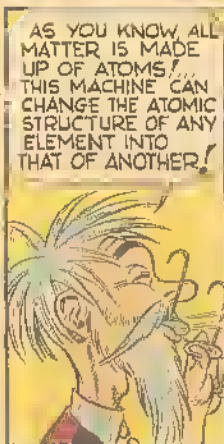
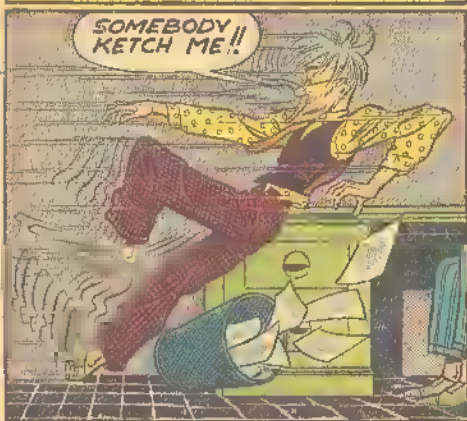
IN THE SECRET QUARTERS OF MIDNIGHT AND HIS PALS

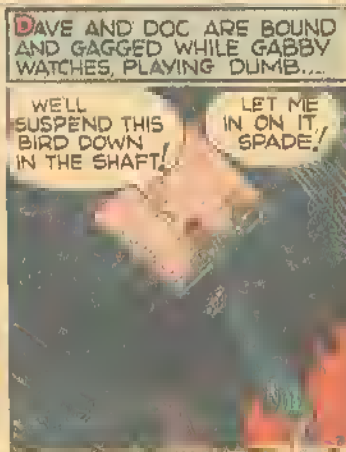
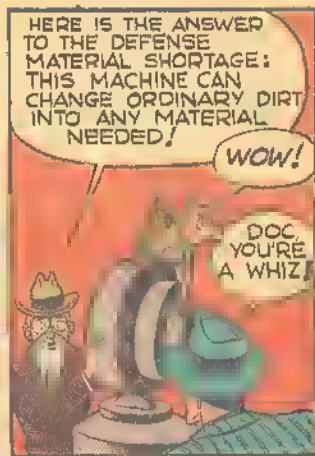


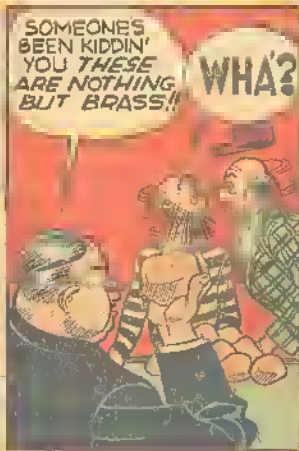
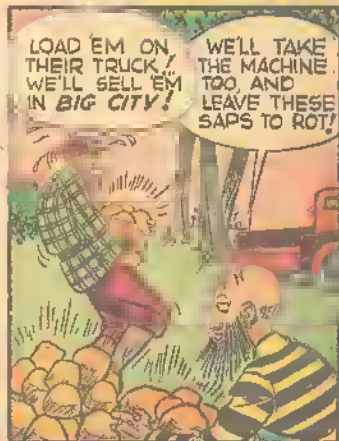
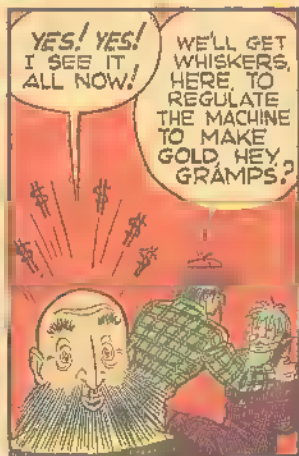
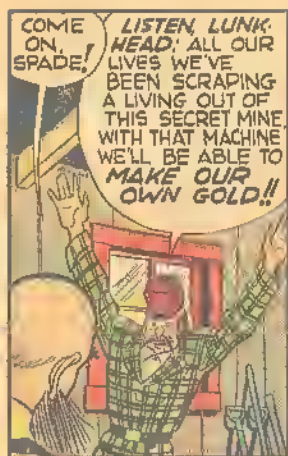
SUDDENLY, FROM THE LABORATORY



THEN OUT FLIES DOC... BACKWARDS...







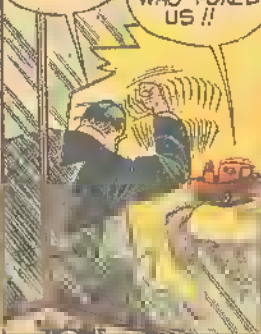
OUTSIDE, SPADE FLASHES
THE RAY ON THE WINDOW...

LAUGH AT
US, WILL YA?
HOW'D YOU
LIKE A WINDOW
FULLA BRASS
JEWELERY!!



COME
BACK!!
HELP!
POLICE!!!

BACK TO
THE SHACK!
WE'LL GET
THAT SKUNK
WHO FOXED
US !!



MEANWHILE, GAB HAS RELEASED
DOC AND DAVE IN THE SHACK...

ARE YOU
SURE THEY'LL
RETURN,
DOC?

WAIT'LL THEY
FIND OUT I SET
THE MACHINE TO
MAKE BRASS!
THEY'LL COME
A'FLYIN' !!!



RIGHT YOU ARE,
DOC... HERE THEY
COME!! BETTER
REVERSE MY SUIT
AND TAKE OVER AS
MIDNIGHT !!!



WHAT
KEPT YOU
BOYS?

HUH?



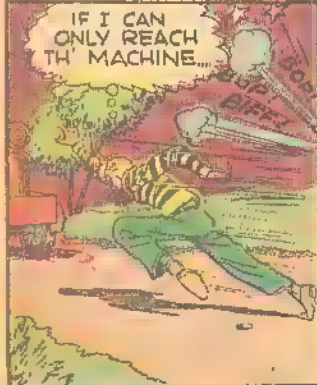
M-M-M-M-
MIDNIGHT!!

ATTA
PAL!!



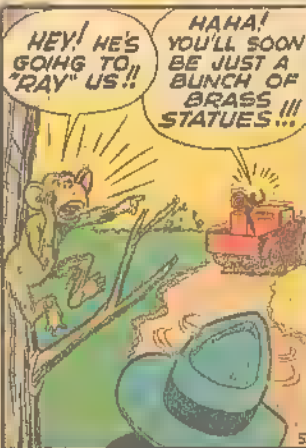
AMID FLYING FISTS WEASEL
ESCAPES TOWARD THE CAR:

IF I CAN
ONLY REACH
TH' MACHINE...



HEY! HE'S
GOING TO
"RAY" US!!

HAHA!
YOU'LL SOON
BE JUST A
BUNCH OF
BRASS
STATUES!!!



THEN HE DOES IT.....



**MIDNIGHT AND SPADE
ARE CAUGHT IN THE RAY:**

TOO BAD,
SPADE BUT I
HAD TO GET
MIDNIGHT!

NOW FOR
YOU, THERE,
GRAMPS!!

BUT BEFORE HE CAN OPERATE...

DIDN'T COUNT
ON ANY
OPPOSITION
FROM ME. EH

SHARK

AS GABBY FIGHTS WEASEL
DOC LEAPS TO THE CONTROL

NOW TO BRING
MIDNIGHT
BACK TO
NORMAL!

BOTH *MIDNIGHT* AND *SPADE* ARE TRANSFORMED TO LIFE...

SHALL WE
CONTINUE
WHERE WE
LEFT OFF?

SPLAT

S-S-STOP!
WE GIVE
UP!!!
L-L-LEMMIE
BEAL!

THAT'S
MORE!
LIKE IT!

HONEST. WE
NEVER STOLE A
THING BEFORE,
IN OUR LIVES!
I DON'T KNOW
WHY WE DID
IT.

GUESS THE
THOUGHT OF
EASY MONEY
WENT TO
OUR HEADS!

I THINK YOU'VE LEARNED
YOUR LESSON, SO WE'LL
LET YOU GO IF YOU'LL
PROMISE **NEVER TO
COMMIT A CRIME
AGAIN !!!**

YES!
YES! WE
PROMISE

YOU'RE A PRINCE!!

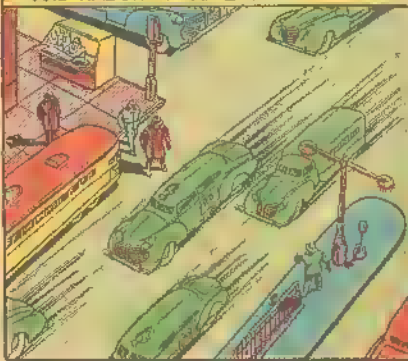
THE

JESTER

by
Paul
Caplan

CHUCK LANE, THE FUMBLING
ROOKIE OF THE NEW YORK
POLICE FORCE IS IN HIS
HILARIOUS ROLE AS THE JESTER
THE MOST FEARED ENFORCER OF
THE LAW IN THE CITY, A LAUGHING CLOWN, WITH
THE STRIKING POWER OF A THUNDERBOLT!!

THE WAIL OF POLICE SIRENS ECHO THROUGH
THE CANYONS OF MANHATTAN AS POLICE CARS
AND WAGONS ROAR UPTOWN.



THE RAID ON CARASO'S GAMBLING
JOINT TONIGHT IS GOING TO
BE THE BIGGEST IN NEW YORK'S HISTORY
LANE!!

YES SIR,
MCGINTY-YOU'LL
GO DOWN IN THE HISTORY
OF NEW YORK'S
FINEST!!



BEFORE LONG, BRAKES
SCREECH AND THE ROT
SQUAD PULLS UP SUDDENLY
IN FRONT OF "THE HELPING
HAND", FAMOUS CHARITY
ORGANIZATION...



CLANCY, TAKE SOME OF THE BOYS AROUND THE BACK AND SEE THAT NO ONE LEAVES... OKAY, BOYS... COME ON!!



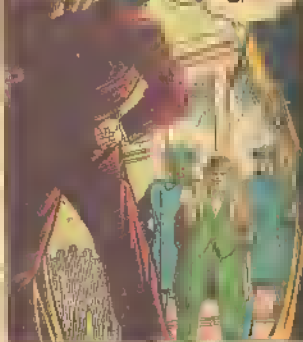
WHAT TH'?

STAY WHERE YOU ARE - IT'S A RAID!!



HEY YOU BUNCH OF DUMB FLAT-FOOTS WHAT'S THE IDEA??

WE DON'T LIKE GAMBLING JOINTS IN THIS TOWN AND WE'RE LOSING YOU UP!!



GAMBLING JOINT!!?? WHY YOU! SURE THERE'S GAMBLING HERE - FOR A BUNCH OF CHEAP TOYS - SO STARVING KIDS CAN EAT!!

YEAH?

YEAH!

LOOK AROUND COPPER, AND WHEN YOU'RE FINISHED I'M GOING TO HAVE YOU BROKEN SO FAST YOU WON'T KNOW WHAT HIT YOU!!

SOME TIME LATER,

HOLY CATS MCGINTY - LOOKS LIKE HE'S RIGHT - AND YOU'RE IN A JAM!!

AW DRY UP! C'MON - CLEAR OUTA HERE!



SO LONG WISE GUY - THE COMMISSIONER WILL BE SEEING YOU!!



YEAH.. S'LONG! WHAT TH'? I WONDER WHAT HE PRESSED THERE? HMM... GUESS I'LL BE SEEING YOU SOON, CARASO - VERY SOON!!



AS THE POLICE ARE LEAVING

SAY, MCGINTY, I'LL GO ON HOME FROM HERE - I'M OFF DUTY NOW!!

OKAY, LANE!

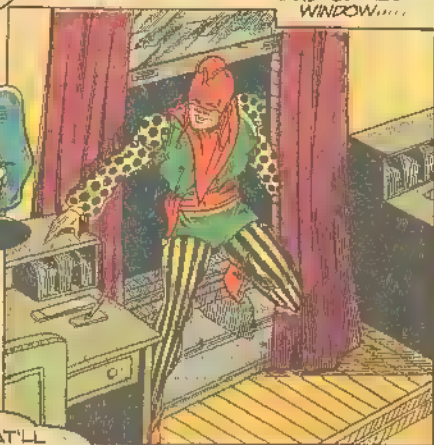


HA-HA-HA! POOR
MCGINTY - HE'LL PROBABLY
AGE TEN YEARS BEFORE
HE FINDS OUT HE WAS
RIGHT - IF I'M NOT TOO
FAIR, WRONG NOW TO
FIND A PLACE WHERE
I CAN DO A LITTLE
QUICK-CHANGING!

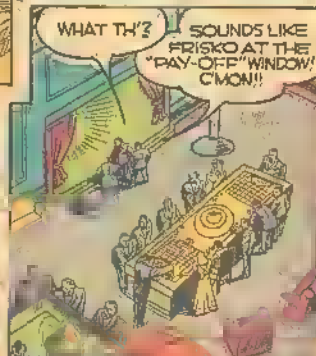
BEFORE LONG CHUCK LANE HAS CHANGED
TO HIS FABULOUS ROLE AS THE JESTER AND
IS ENTERING "THE HELPING HAND" BY THE BACK
WINDOW.

CUPIE DOLL! YOU DID ALL RIGHT,
TONIGHT, MISS WESTON - THAT
NETS YOU \$10,000!!

OH!
OH!!

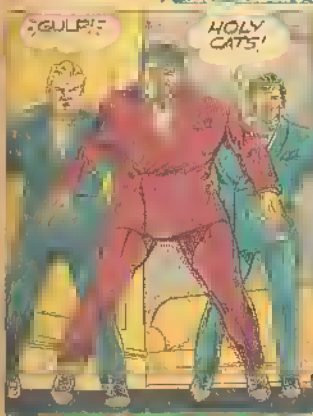


WHAT'LL
THIS NET ME,
BUD?



WHAT TH'?

SOUNDS LIKE
FRISKO AT THE
"PAY-OFF" WINDOW!
C'MON!!



GULP!!

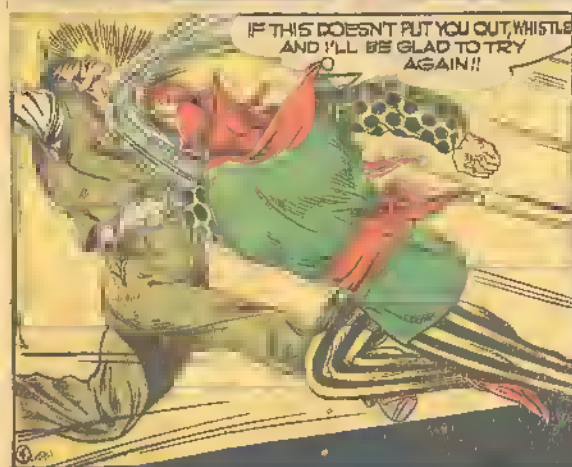
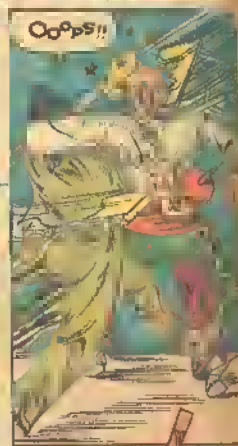
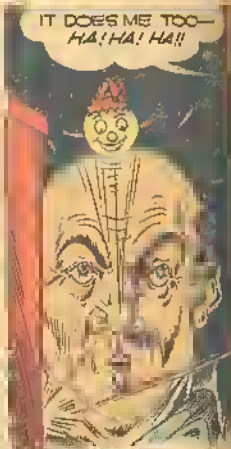
HOLY
CATS!



TH'
JESTER!!

WHY THE
LOW-DOWN-

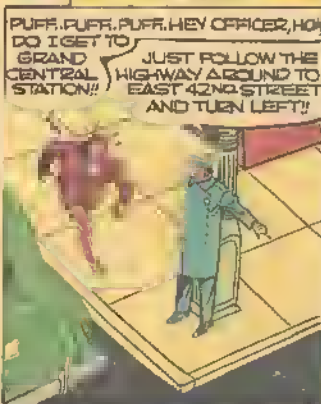




SOME TIME LATER... UPSTAIRS...



LATER-WITH CHUCK BACK IN UNIFORM...



ROOKIE RANKIN

By ARTHUR PEDDY

SOMETIMES FOLKS DREAM WHILE THEY'RE WIDE AWAKE. ROOKIE WAKES FROM HIS "DAZE-DREAMING" TO FIND HIMSELF IN MORE EXCITING ACTION THAN ANY DREAM COULD POSSIBLY INVENT.

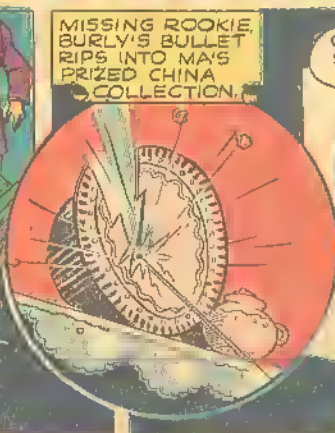
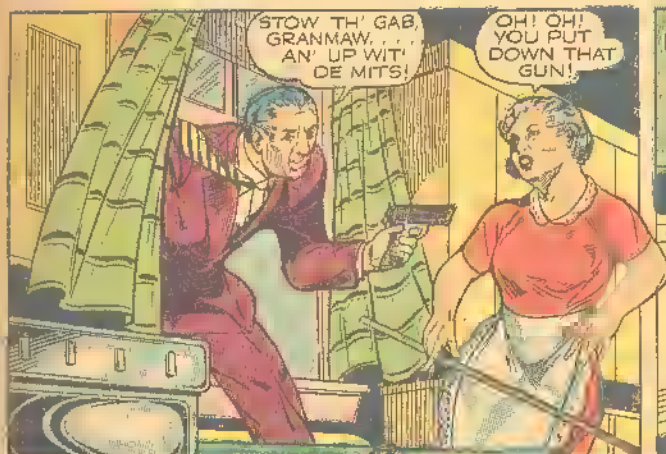
AS USUAL, ROOKIE IS UNDERFOOT WHILE HIS MA TRIES TO MOP THE KITCHEN FLOOR..

AN' LISSEN TO THIS: "BURLY MONAHAN RELEASED ON PAROLE".. I PINCHED THAT GUY LAST YEAR!

SO? HE WON'T BE GUNNIN' FOR YOU, SON.. YOU SCARED HIM SKINNY!

BUT EVEN AS MA REASSURES HERSELF, HER EYES STRAY TO THE WINDOW.

EEEEEEK!
ROOKIE!
R-ROOKIE!!



ROOKIE DOES SOME FANCY PUNCHING AND FAST FOOTWORK... AND DOES NOT EVEN FEEL HIS FOOT DIVE INTO THE WASH PAIL UNTIL...



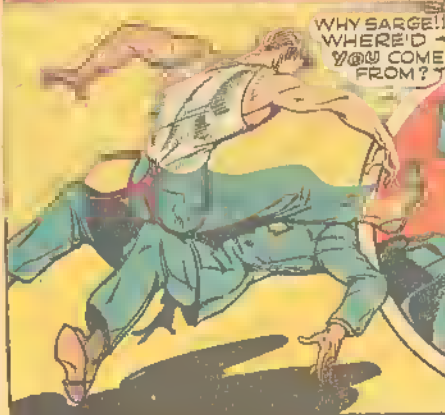
BURLY TAKES THE CHANCE TO SKIP OUT.



BUT STILL IN HIS CARPET SLIPPERS, ROOKIE HOPS TO THE FIRE-ESCAPE.



WITH A HEALTHY SWING, ROOKIE LETS GO TO LAND ON HIS PREY BUT...



FROM HEAVEN!! YE DIM-WITTED DOPE! AN' I NIVER KNEW MONKEYS FLY OFF FIRE-ESCAPES... AN' WHERE'S YER UNIFORM?



CAN'T EXPLAIN NOW, SARGE. GOT BIG BUSINESS TO DO!



"I'LL 'BORROW' THIS CYCLE, YOU CALM DOWN, SARGE, AN' TELL MA I'M OKAY!"



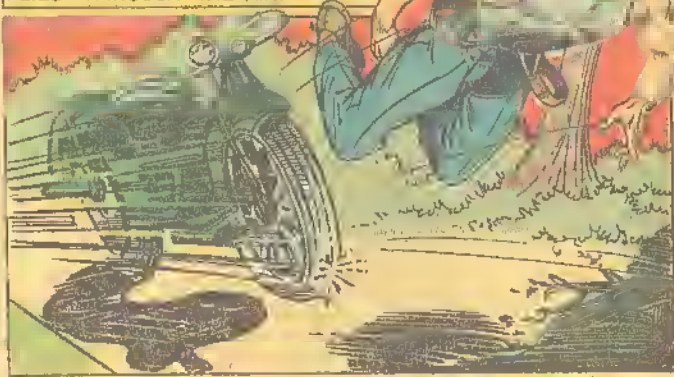
BURLY MONAHAN NOSES HIS SLEEK ROADSTER OUT OF TOWN... ROOKIE FOLLOWS, HIS MOTORCYCLE EATING UP THE MILES...



MONAHAN LOOKS BACK, AND...



HIS BULLET PUNCTURES ROOKIE'S FRONT TIRE... GROGGY, THE DRIVER FLIES THROUGH THE AIR...



BUT MONAHAN SKIDS AT THE SAME INSTANT AND LIKEWISE SAILS THROUGH SPACE



HA! GOOD I LANDED FIRST TO WELCOME YOU!



SA-AY... THERE'S A HOUSE! MAYBE THE FOLKS WILL LET ME USE THEIR PHONE...



INSIDE, TWO MEN STARE THROUGH THE WINDOW.

BURLY GOT HERE. BUT LOOK HOW! THAT-AIN'T NO COPPER WHO SLUGGED HIM...I HOPE!

WHOEVER HE IS HE DON'T LOVE US NONE!

IN STRUTS ROOKIE

HI, FOLKS! GOT A PHONE I COULD

HEY! WHY THE GUN?

OOOOPS! YOU'RE BURLY'S PALS!

OKAY! YOU'VE GOT ME!

SURE WE GOT YA... AN' WE DON'T LIKE THE WAY YA TOSS CUR BOSS AROUND!

HAVE A LITTLE SNEEZE DUST, BOYS... IT'S ON THE HOUSE!

ROOKIE REACHES... FOR A PEPPER SHAKER.

BLINDED BY A SMOKE SCREEN OF PEPPER, THE THUGS RESIST VAINLY. . . SUDDENLY. . .

JUMPIN' JEEPERS! TH' COPS ARE A-Coming!



COMPLETELY IGNORING BURLY'S
HENCHMEN, THE POLICE GO FOR
ROOKIE.



Follow Rookie Rankin each and every month in SMASH COMICS.

Wildfire

WHEN HER PARENTS DIED IN A GREAT FOREST FIRE, CAROL VANCE WAS GIVEN THE POWER TO USE FLAMES AS A WEAPON AND DEFENSE AGAINST THE FORCES OF EVIL, BY THE GOD OF FIRE. NOW, AS THE ADOPTED DAUGHTER OF MR. AND MRS. JOHN MARTIN, CAROL HAS GROWN INTO A BEAUTIFUL DEBUTANTE, WHO SECRETLY IS THE FIERY NEMESIS OF ALL WRONG-DOERS, **WILDFIRE!!**



AT SNOW VALLEY, AMERICA'S SMARTEST WINTER RESORT,

MISS CAROL MARTIN, MEET MICKEY KEENE, THE YOUNG MOVIE STAR!

I LIKE YOUR PICTURES, MICKEY, AND HAVE ALWAYS WANTED TO MEET YOU!

GEE THANKS, MISS MARTIN! YOU OUGHT TO BE IN THE MOVIES TOO, YOU'RE SO PRETTY!

I'VE HEARD YOU'RE CRAZY ABOUT SKIING, MICKEY. HOW ABOUT YOU AND ME SLIDING DOWN A FEW MOUNTAINS THIS AFTERNOON?

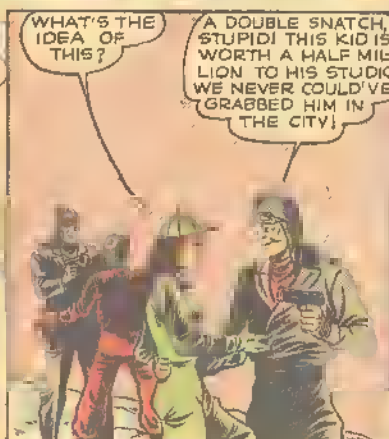
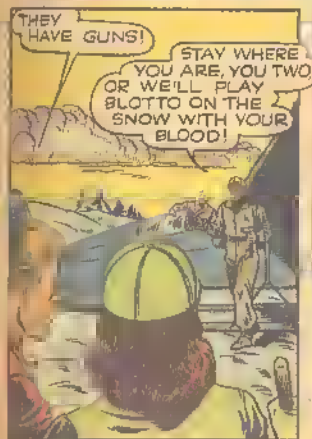
I WAS PLANNING TO GO BY MYSELF, BUT IT'LL BE SWEET TO HAVE YOU FOR COMPANY!

COARSE WHISPERS COME FROM DINERS NEARBY.

HOW ABOUT THAT, BOSS? WE PLAN TO SNATCH THE KID THIS AFTERNOON WHEN HE'S OUT ON THE HILLS AND NOW SHE'S...

SO WHAT? THAT GAMES WORTH A FORTUNE, TOO! WE'LL MAKE IT A DOUBLE-HEADER!



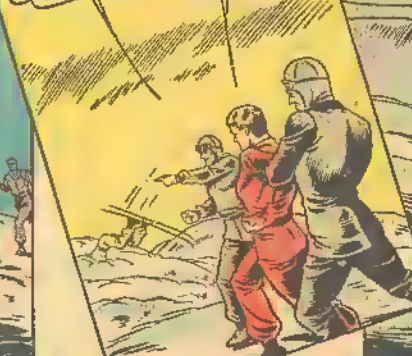


THEY'LL KILL THAT POOR KID! I'VE GOT TO BECOME WILDFIRE IN A HURRY!



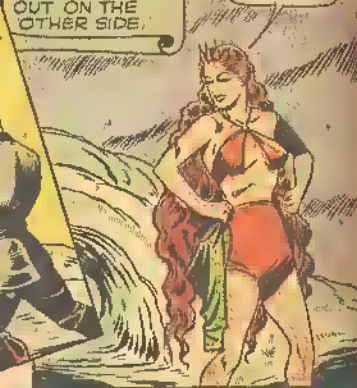
HEY, SHE'S TRYING TO GET AWAY! AFTER HER!

GO IT CAROL!



BORING THROUGH THE SNOW BANK, CAROL COMES OUT ON THE OTHER SIDE.

NOW TO GIVE THIS BUNCH A LITTLE TROUBLE!



SHE'S STUCK THERE, HEAD FIRST! GRAB HER SKIS!



W-W-WHERE'D SHE GO TO?



MIND IF I BORROW A LIGHT? I NEED FLAMES TO WORK WITH!

WHO ARE YOU? WHERE'D YOU COME FROM?



YOU GUYS ARE WASTING YOUR BULLETS. I'VE HEARD OF THIS GIRL, SHE'S WILDFIRE!

WILDFIRE IS GOING OUT LIKE A LIGHT! SOME LEAD IN HER HEAD WILL DO IT!



ONE OF WILDFIRE'S SWIFTLY-HURLED FLAME DARTS STRIKES THE SKIS.

THE SKIS BURST IN FLAMES!



HER FLAME SHIELD IS STOPPING THE BULLETS!

AS MICKEY WOULD SAY HAVE SOME HEAT, DEAD BEAT!



THEN THE FLAMES
STRIKE THE GUN.



WE CAN'T FIGHT THAT
HUMAN INFERNO. BACK
TO THE PLANE!



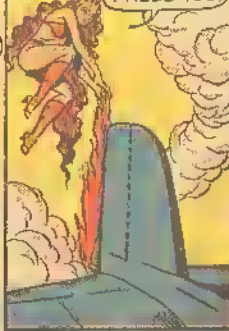
I WONDER WHAT HAPPENED
TO MISS MARTIN?

I'LL OH FIND HER AND
SEND HER BACK TO THE
INN. MEANWHILE TIE A
ROPE AROUND THAT
LUG AND DRAG HIM
BACK TO THE RESORT
AND CALL THE RANGERS!
BY THE TIME THEY GET
THERE, I'LL
HAVE THE
REST OF THE
GANG!

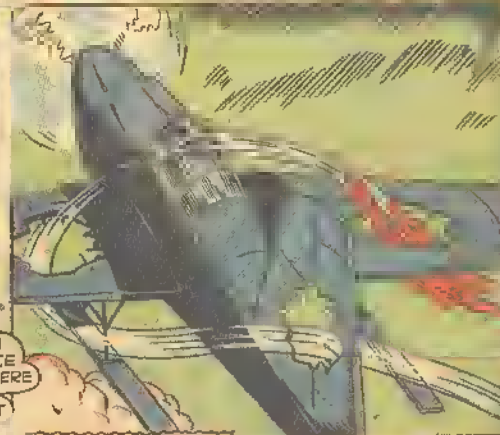
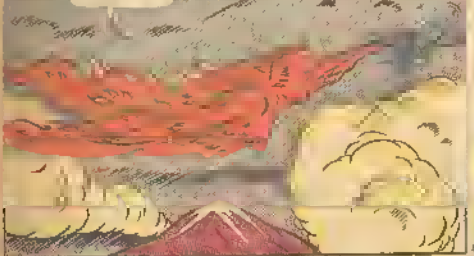


WILDFIRE ZOOMS INTO
THE AIR AND AFTER
THE KIDNAPPER'S
PLANE.

FLAMES
FROM THE EXHAUST!
I NEED YOU!



I'LL WRAP MYSELF IN THIS
SHAWL OF FIRE AND
THEN...



HAPPY
LANDINGS!

KING MOUNTAIN PLATEAU
THERE IS THE ONLY PLACE
OUTSIDE THE VALLEY WHERE
A PLANE COULD BE
LANDED! THE REST
OF THE GANG
MUST BE IN THAT
CAVE!

INSIDE THE CAVE..

IT'S ABOUT TIME
SLIPPERY AND THE
OTHERS WERE SHOW-
ING UP WITH THE KID!

RED! LOOK
THERE AT
THE ENTRANCE!





RED COLES, YOU'RE DUE TO LIVE UP TO YOUR NAME AND BURN FOR ATTEMPTED KIDNAPING!

LISTEN TO THE DAME... THIS WILL SHUT HER UP!



SHE CAUGHT IT... OLP! SHE'S HOLDING THE FLAMES IN HER BARE HAND!

JUST WHAT I NEEDED BOYS!



RUN, BOSS, RUN! THAT DAME AIN'T HUMAN!

WHADDA YOU THINK I'M DOING? OUT OF MY WAY!



OUTSIDE, THE THUGS GRAB A BIG BOB-SLED AND...

SO THEY THINK THEY'RE GETTING AWAY! JUST WAIT TILL THEY HIT THAT LAKE!



SHE'S M-MELTING THE ICE ALL AROUND US!

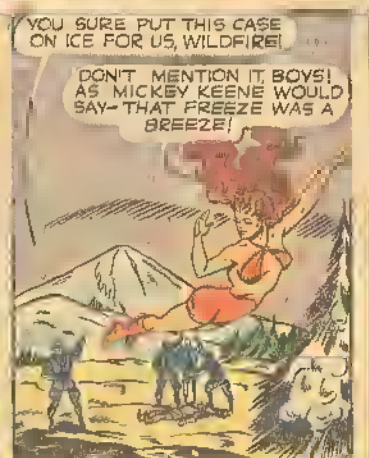


SPLASH!



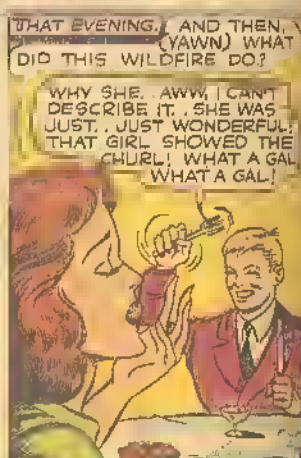
THESE GHOULS WILL NOW KEEP COOL!

BRRRRR!



YOU SURE PUT THIS CASE ON ICE FOR US, WILDFIRE!

DON'T MENTION IT BOYS! AS MICKEY KEENE WOULD SAY-THAT FREEZE WAS A BREEZE!



THAT EVENING... AND THEN, (YAWN) WHAT DID THIS WILDFIRE DO?

WHY SHE. AWW I CAN'T DESCRIBE IT. SHE WAS JUST... JUST WONDERFUL! THAT GIRL SHOWED THE CHURL! WHAT A GAL! WHAT A GAL!

The MONSTER

A hush lay over the valley. It was a quiet that lacked repose. It was filled with the indefinable, pulsating vibrations of a thousand silent voices.

The valley slept uneasily in the calm night. Overhead, a great moon seemed to race with a host of fleecy clouds, scampering to the west like frightened sheep. Nothing moved below, except an errant breeze that touched only the tips of the sugar cane that stretched in a mighty ocean of green for miles in every direction. Most of this valley was a part of the vast sugar plantation of Senor Don Vegas Calle y Guzman, lord of Puerto Rico, self-styled.

Don Vegas, it was said, owned almost every inch of land that covered a fourth of the island, and his wealth was enormous. Don Vegas was a generous, kind-hearted man and, although he employed hundreds of native workers on his one-man empire, he treated all with respect.

It was only recently that trouble had come to the valley. "The Monster" had come to change the serenity of the lush valley into a devil's cauldron of fear and evil. At first, Don Vegas was disposed to regard the stories of "the monster" with something of disdain; natives were constantly fabricating tales of weird manifestations . . . mere products of their wild imaginations, of course.

But Pedro Salazar brought the thing forcefully to Don Vegas' attention. Pedro was the Don's foreman.

"Senor Don," he cried one evening, "it is true! With my own eyes I have seen it!"

"Seen what, Pedrocito?"

"The — what they say — the — monster!"

Don Vegas chuckled. "Perhaps

the sun was overly hot for you today, Pedro, no?"

Pedro Salazar looked as if he were about to cry.

"You no think that Pedro would lie?" he queried in a hurt tone. "You have only to go to the north end of the valley and there see for yourself! It appears every night, or so the workers say!"

Don Vegas did visit the valley that night, but without letting Pedro know. The next morning he sat in his comfortable hacienda office and recounted his queer experience to Jimmy Christian, a young American in Puerto Rico to look for future naval air bases.

"It was exactly the way I saw it, Senor Christian! A great shapeless mass that seemed to suddenly grow before my eyes, and give off a weird glow. It moved across the valley from east to west, and it grew until it was larger than any living thing!"

"But," said Jimmy, "what did it do? Was it . . ."

"Caranba!" interjected the excited Latin. "What *did* it do! It moved over the valley, close to the ground . . . back and forth, back and forth . . . and this morning, Senor, many acres of my most valuable cane were dead. They look as if a terrible blight had struck them!"

"Interesting," said Jimmy. "I'll take a look into it, Don Vegas. Sounds promising!"

"Ah!" Don Vegas stood up and shook hands with the young American. "I knew I could count on you. Anything you name—any price—is yours if you can stop this—this thing! You see scaring my workers away; they are very superstitious, you know. And without a full crew I cannot harvest my cane."

In town that afternoon, Jimmy made discreet inquiry about Don Vegas. Had he any enemies? Was he a good citizen? When had he come to the island?

To all his questions he received reassuring answers. Don Vegas was a man of upright morals and ideals. He had settled in Puerto Rico in the early '90's, the son of a wealthy Seville merchant. Now he was the largest planter on the island.

His only competitor was one Martin Hess, a Bavarian, about whom little was known except that he owned an estate almost as large as Don Vegas'.

"Anyway, I'll check up on Herr Hess," Jimmy told himself.

Hess turned out to be a cordial host, much younger than Don Vegas, and he seemed very well satisfied with himself and the world in general.

"Oh, that 'monster' thing!" he chuckled when Jimmy probed him about the mystery. "A lot of native superstition, of course."

"But the dying cane — the blight," Jimmy urged. "How do you account for that?"

Hess shrugged. "Peculiar, that. Most peculiar."

If Hess had anything to do with the mystery, he certainly didn't act like it. Jimmy concluded as he took his leave. Motive? If Hess



had one, it could only be hate, revenge for something Don Vegas had done to him, or the desire to get hold of the Latin's plantation. None of them fixed the pattern.

Jimmy naturally brushed aside any supernatural angle of the mystery; the trick was being engineered by some clever human

... and Jimmy meant to find out who!

For the next three days, however, he was tied up with Col. Allen Dexter, commandante of the Naval Air Base. Col. Dexter flew him all around the island, and Jimmy mapped out a half dozen future air bases for the United States Government.

Then he was on his way to the plantation of Don Vegas. He sensed a change as he was driven through the great fields of waving cane, and as he approached nearer the rumbling hacienda, he knew something bad had happened. Whole fields lay sere and burned, as if swept by a withering wind. There were no laborers in the fields.

Don Vegas met him with shaken voice,

"Oh, señor, I am desolate! I am ruined!"

Jimmy was sympathetic. "What happened, Don Vegas?"

The don waved his hand. "The monster! It has burned up my cane fields, and driven nearly all my people away!"

Jimmy said, "Have you noticed that it—whatever it is—attacks only the small plants, those less than a foot high?"

The don nodded. "Senor," he said tremulously, "whatever you want, men, anything, I will give you. Only please do something about this terrible thing. Santa Maria, I am a ruined man!"

Jimmy smiled. "I'll need no help, Don Vegas. I can do much better alone. Tonight I shall find out what your 'monster' is, that I promise you!"

When Jimmy set off from the plantation that evening, he carried only a small air rifle. His choice of a weapon had elicited considerable speculation among the members of Don Vegas' household. He kept quiet, however, as he was following a hunch, based on the reports he had heard of the monster's dimensions.

It was dark when Jimmy reached the head of the valley and took up a position on a rocky ledge about two hundred feet above the valley floor. There was



no moon, and the night was dark, filled with the flitting sparks of fireflies.

Jimmy was suddenly conscious of a grayish mass that had slowly detached itself from a hillside about two hundred yards below and beyond him. The thing seemed to throb and vibrate and to grow with spasmodic jerks. Its immense outlines—and Jimmy thought he could detect in its globular mass the faint resemblance to a mighty octopus, without the tentacles—glowed with a greenish emanation, smoldering and flaring up in spots, as its tremendous girth swelled.

The thing was now a good fifty feet across and seemed to be gaining in size. It moved slowly away from the hillside, across a field of small cane, over a narrow stream, and drifted silently down the valley.

Jimmy cautiously made his way down from the ledge, his hurried descent caused a tiny avalanche of pebbles to follow him. If the thing heard it, there was no indication. And at last Jimmy stood on the valley floor. He held the air rifle. Should he fire at the thing? No, better follow it for a while.

A scream a few hundred yards away sent Jimmy hurrying ahead. Some native, perhaps, had seen the grotesque mass and had bolted.

Several natives broke into the clear from a copse of dagger bush

and ran screaming across a cane field toward the village, two miles away.

Jimmy crept up on his quarry. Now he was but fifty yards away...

He fired. There was a loud *pop!* and the mass vanished. Then Jimmy saw a man running through a cane field.

"Stop!" he shouted. "Stop, or I shoot!"

The man didn't slow down. Jimmy sprinted after him. Then suddenly the man fell, stumbling over a root, and Jimmy was upon him, grabbing at the automatic which the fallen man had whipped out of a pocket.

"Take it easy!" Jimmy warned, as he pried the gun out of the man's hand. Then:

"So it's you, Herr Hess! I had an idea it was. What's your game?"

"All right," growled the Bavarian. "If it hadn't been for you, I'd have ruined that swine Don Vegas. I've already chased nearly all of his employees off the place, and his cane crop this year will be about one-fourth, thanks to some poison spray I've been spreading around."

"That's why you used the big toy balloon—to hide you while you sprayed poison, eh? Where did you get that balloon?"

"China," replied Hess. "But I used it also to frighten the silly natives. It worked, too, especially after I daubed it with phosphorescent paint."

Jimmy covered Hess with the latter's pistol.

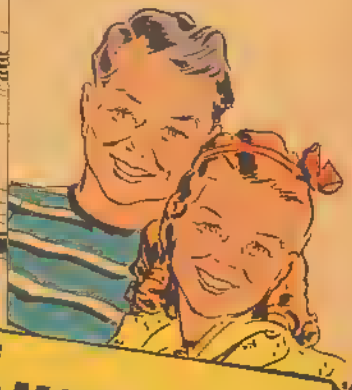
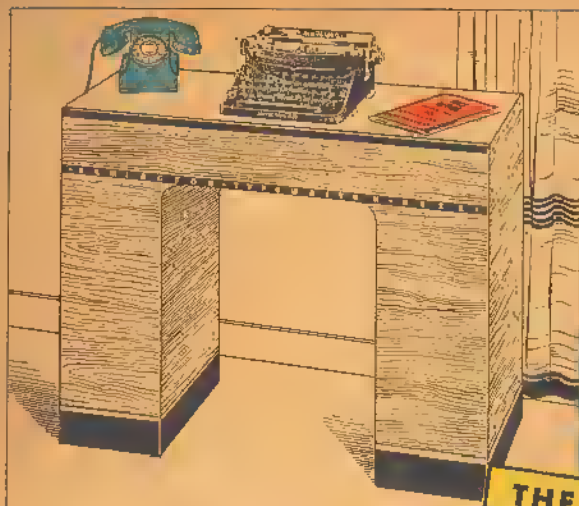
"All right," he said. "You've told the story to me; I guess you'll have a chance to tell it to the court. Why did you hate Don Vegas?"

The Bavarian grimaced. "That," he said, "is for you to find out!"

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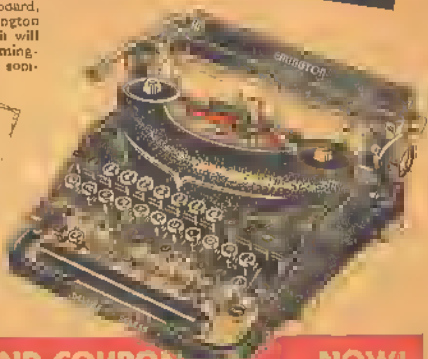
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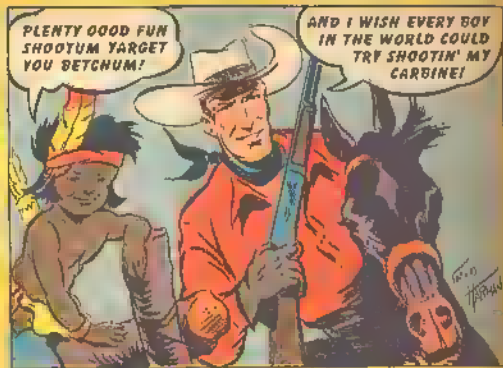
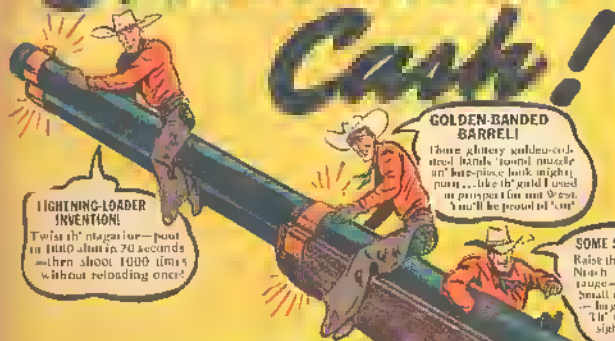
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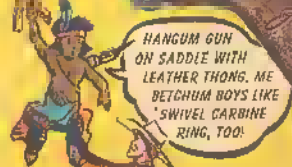
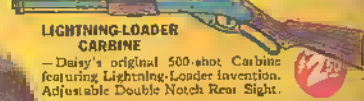
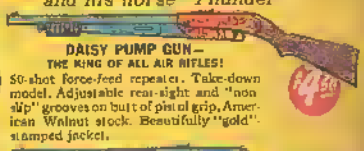
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